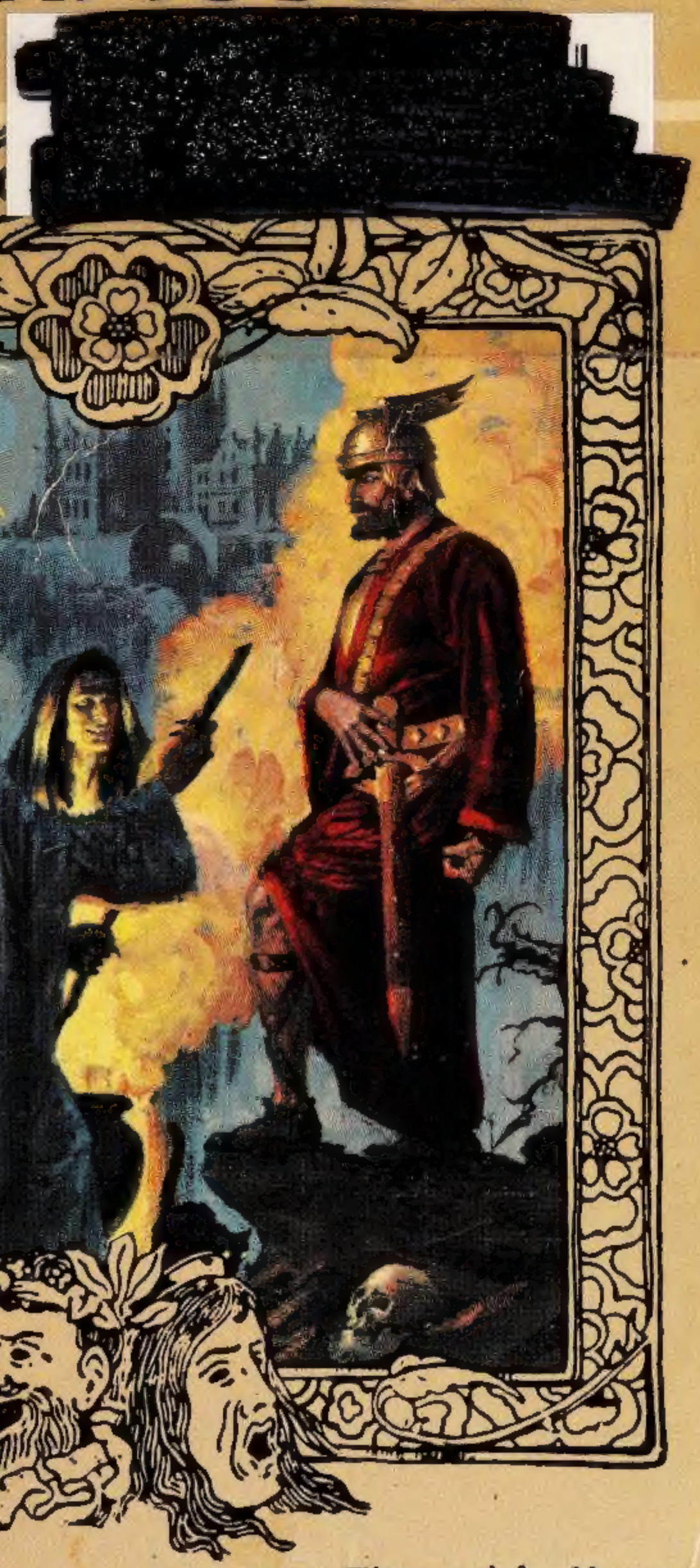
CLASSICS SERIES **S2**

AIRMONT $1.75

William Shakespeare

The Tragedy of

MACBETH



John Dennis Duffy , *Introduction* / Lucy M. Fitzpatrick, *Notes*

AIRMONT SHAKESPEARE CLASSICS SERIES

The Tragedy of Macbeth

By

William Shakespeare

WITHDRAWN

AIRMONT BOOKS

CLARK COUNTY LIBRARY
609 CADDO STREET
ARKADELPHIA, AR 71923

AIRMONT BOOKS
NEW YORK

An Airmont Classic
specially selected for the Airmont Library
from the immortal literature of the world

THE SPECIAL CONTENTS OF THIS EDITION
©, Copyright, 1965, by
Airmont Publishing Company, Inc.

ISBN: 0-8049-1002-2

INVARIATION

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIRMONT PUBLISHING CO., INC., New York, N.Y.

PREFACE

For the Airmont series of plays by William Shakespeare, we have chosen a text that we believe more nearly preserves the flavor of the old Shakespearean English than do those of more modernized versions.

In a popular-priced paperback edition, it is almost impossible to include a complete compilation of notes because of the limitations of the format. We suggest that the reader refer to the following excellent textbooks for additional material: *The New Valiorum* (Cambridge and Arden editions); the Globe edition edited by W. G. Clark and W. A. Wright (1866); the Oxford edition edited by W. J. Craig (1891); and the editions by G. L. Kittredge (1936). Also, the following books will be helpful to a better understanding of Shakespeare: M. W. McCallum, *Shakespeare's Roman Plays* (1910); Harley Granville-Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare, First Series* (London, 1933); John Palmer, *Political Characters of Shakespeare* (London, 1945); Gerald Sanders, *A Shakespeare Primer* (New York and Toronto, 1945); J. Dover Wilson, *The Essential Shakespeare* (London, 1930; New York, 1932).

Dr. David G. Pitt, who wrote the general introduction for each of the plays, received his B.A. degree from Mt. Allison University in New Brunswick, and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Toronto. Since 1949, he has been in the English Department at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Professor of English there since 1962. His publications include articles on literary and educational subjects, and editorial work on Shakespeare.

John Dennis Duffy, who wrote the introduction for *Macbeth*, was born in Louisville, Kentucky. He attended Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., where he received his A.B. degree. In 1962, he received an M.A. from the University of Toronto, and in 1964, a Ph.D. At present, he is a lecturer in English at Trinity College, University of Toronto, where he is conducting research in Victorian literature.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/tragedyofmacbeth0000shak

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

William Shakespeare: His Life, Times, and Theatre

HIS LIFE

The world's greatest poet and playwright, often called the greatest Englishman, was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, in the year 1564. The exact date of his birth is uncertain, but an entry in the *Stratford Parish Register* gives his baptismal date as April 26. Since children were usually baptized two or three days after birth, it is reasonable to assume that he was born on or about April 23—an appropriate day, being the feast of St. George, the patron saint of England.

His father, John Shakespeare, was a glover and dealer in wool and farm products, who had moved to Stratford from Snitterfield, four miles distant, some time before 1552. During his early years in Stratford his business prospered, enabling him to acquire substantial property, including several houses, and to take his place among the more considerable citizens of the town. In 1557 he married Mary, daughter of Robert Arden, a wealthy landowner of Wilmcote, not far from Stratford. Two daughters were born to them before William's birth—Joan, baptized in 1558, and Margaret, baptized in 1562—but both died in infancy. William was thus their third child, though the

eldest of those who survived infancy. After him were born Gilbert (1566), another Joan (1569), Anne (1571), Richard (1574), and Edmund (1580).

Very little is positively known (though much is conjectured) about Shakespeare's boyhood and education. We know that for some years after William's birth his father's rise in Stratford society and municipal affairs continued. Many local offices came to him in rapid succession: ale-taster, burgess (a kind of constable), assessor of fines, chamberlain (town treasurer), high bailiff (a kind of magistrate), alderman (town councilor), and chief alderman in 1571. As the son of a man of such eminence in Stratford, Shakespeare undoubtedly attended the local Grammar School. This he was entitled to do free of charge, his father being a town councilor. No records of the school are extant, so that we do not know how good a pupil he was, nor what subjects he studied. It is probable that he covered the usual Elizabethan curriculum: an "A B C book," the catechism in Latin and English, Latin grammar, the translation of Latin authors, and perhaps some Greek grammar and translation as well. But family circumstances appear to have curtailed his formal education before it was complete, for shortly before William reached his fourteenth birthday his father's rising fortunes abruptly passed their zenith.

Although we do not know all the facts, it is apparent that about the year 1578, having gone heavily into debt, John Shakespeare lost two large farms inherited by his wife from her father. Thereafter, he was involved in a series of lawsuits, and lost his post on the Stratford town council. Matters got steadily

worse for him, until finally, in 1586, he was declared a bankrupt. But by this time the future poet-dramatist was already a family man himself.

In 1582, in the midst of his father's legal and financial crises—and perhaps because of them—Shakespeare married Anne, daughter of Richard Hathaway (recently deceased) of the village of Shottery near Stratford. The *Episcopal Register* for the Diocese of Worcester contains their marriage record, dated November 28, 1582; he was then in his eighteenth year and his wife in her twenty-sixth. On May 26 of the following year the *Stratford Parish Register* recorded the baptism of their first child, Susanna; and on February 2, 1585, the baptism of a twin son and daughter named Hamnet and Judith.

These facts are all that are known of Shakespeare's early life. How he supported his family, whether he took up some trade or profession, how long he continued to live in Stratford, we do not know for certain. Tradition and conjecture have bestowed on him many interim occupations between his marriage and his appearance in London in the early fifteen-nineties: printer, dyer, traveling-player, butcher, soldier, apothecary, thief—it reads like a children's augury-rhyme (when buttons or cherry-stones are read to learn one's fate). Perhaps only the last-named "pursuit" requires some explanation. According to several accounts, one of them appearing in the first *Life* of Shakespeare by Nicholas Rowe (1709), Shakespeare fell into bad company some time after his marriage, and on several occasions stole deer from the park of Sir Thomas Lucy, a substantial gentleman of Charlecote, near Stratford. According to Rowe:

> For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought somewhat too severely; and in order to revenge that ill-usage, he made a ballad upon him . . . and was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire, for some time, and shelter himself in London.

The story has been repeated in varying forms by most subsequent biographers, but its authenticity is doubted by many who repeat it.

Another much more attractive story, which, however, if true, does not necessarily deny the authenticity of Rowe's, is that Shakespeare during the so-called "lost years" was a schoolmaster. This, indeed, appears to be somewhat better substantiated. John Aubrey, seventeenth-century biographer and antiquary, in his *Brief Lives* (1681), declares that he had learned from a theatrical manager, whose father had known Shakespeare, that the dramatist "had been in his younger years a schoolmaster in the country." This may, then, account, in part at least, for the years between his marriage and his arrival in London about the year 1591. It is interesting to note that in two of his early plays Shakespeare includes a schoolmaster among his characters: Holofernes of *Love's Labour's Lost* and Pinch of *The Comedy of Errors*. But let us hope that neither is intended to be Shakespeare's portrait of himself!

However he may have occupied himself in the interim, we know that by 1592 he was already a budding actor and playwright in London. In that year Robert Greene in his autobiographical pamphlet *A Groatsworth of Wit*, referring to the young actors and menders of old plays who were, it seemed to him,

gaining undeserved glory from the labors of their betters (both by acting their plays and by rewriting them), wrote as follows:

> Yes trust them not: for there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hyde, supposes he is as well able to bombast out blanke verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Johannes factotum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shakescene in a countrey.

"Shakescene" is clearly Shakespeare. The phrase "upstart Crow" probably refers to his country origins and his lack of university education. "Beautified with our feathers" probably means that he uses the older playwrights' words for his own aggrandisement either in plays in which he acts or in those he writes himself. "Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hyde" is a parody of a line in III *Henry VI*, one of the earliest plays ascribed to Shakespeare. And the Latin phrase *Johannes factotum*, meaning Jack-of-all-trades, suggests that he was at this time engaged in all sorts of theatrical jobs: actor, poet, playwright, and perhaps manager as well.

Greene died shortly after making this scurrilous attack on the young upstart from Stratford, and so escaped the resentment of those he had insulted. But Henry Chettle, himself a minor dramatist, who had prepared Greene's manuscript for the printer, in his *Kind-Harts Dreame* (1592), apologized to Shakespeare for his share in the offence:

> I am as sory as if the originall fault had beene my fault, because my selfe have seene his demeanor

> no lesse civill, than he excelent in the qualitie he professes: Besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, that approoves his Art.

Thus, in a very indirect manner and because of an attack upon him by an irascible dying man, we learn that Shakespeare at this time was in fact held in high regard by "divers of worship," that is, by many of high birth, as an upright, honest young man of pleasant manners and manifest skill as actor, poet, and playwright.

Although Shakespeare by 1593 had written, or written parts of, some five or six plays (I, II, and III *Henry VI*, *Richard III*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and perhaps *Titus Andronicus*), it was as a non-dramatic poet that he first appeared in print. *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, long narrative poems, both bearing Shakespeare's name, were published in 1593 and 1594 respectively. But thereafter for the next twenty years he wrote almost nothing but drama. In his early period, 1591 to 1596, in addition to the plays named above, he wrote *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Richard II*, and *King John*. Then followed his great middle period, 1596 to 1600, during which he wrote both comedies and history-plays: *The Merchant of Venice*, I and II *Henry IV*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*. The period of his great tragedies and the so-called "dark comedies" followed (1600-1608): *Hamlet*, *Troilus*

and Cressida, All's Well that Ends Well, Measure for Measure, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Timon of Athens, and *Coriolanus*. The last phase of his career as dramatist, 1608 to 1613, sometimes called "the period of the romances," produced *Pericles, Prince of Tyre, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, The Tempest*, parts of *Henry VIII*, and perhaps parts of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Many other plays were ascribed to him, but it is doubtful that he had a hand in any but those we have named. Long before his death in 1616 his name held such magic for the public that merely to print it on the title page of any play assured its popular acclaim. The "upstart Crow" had come a long way since 1592.

He had come a long way, too, from the economic straits that may well have driven him to London many years before. We know, for example, from the records of tax assessments that by 1596 Shakespeare was already fairly well-to-do. This is further borne out by his purchasing in the following year a substantial house known as New Place and an acre of land in Stratford for £60, a sizable sum in those days. In 1602 he made a further purchase of 107 acres at Stratford for £320, and a cottage and more land behind his estate at New Place. But his life during this time was not quite unclouded. His only son, Hamnet, died in 1596 at the age of eleven years, his father in 1601, and his mother in 1608. All three were buried in Stratford. More happily he saw, in 1607, the marriage of his daughter Susanna to Dr. John Hall, an eminent physician of Stratford, and, in the following year, the baptism of his granddaughter, Elizabeth Hall.

Shakespeare's retirement to Stratford appears to

have been gradual, but by 1613, if not earlier, he seems to have settled there, though he still went up to London occasionally. Of the last months of his life we know little. We do know that in February, 1616, his second daughter, Judith, married Thomas Quiney. We know that on March 25, apparently already ill, Shakespeare revised and signed his will, among other bequests leaving to his wife his "second best bed with the furniture." A month later he was dead, dying on his fifty-second birthday, April 23, 1616. He was buried in the chancel of Holy Trinity Church, Stratford, on April 26.

HIS TIMES

Shakespeare lived during the English Renaissance, that age of transition that links the Mediaeval and the Modern world. Inheriting the rich traditions of the Middle Ages in art, learning, religion, and politics, rediscovering the great legacies of classical culture, the men of the Renaissance went on to new and magnificent achievements in every phase of human endeavour. No other period in history saw such varied and prolific development and expansion. And the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), Shakespeare's age, was the High Renaissance in England.

Development and expansion—these are the watchwords of the age, and they apply to every aspect of life, thought, and activity. The universe grew in immensity as men gradually abandoned the old Ptolemaic view of a finite, earth-centered universe, accepting the enormous intellectual challenge of the illimitable cosmos of Copernicus' theory and Galileo's telescope. The earth enlarged, too, as more of its surface

was discovered and charted by explorers following the lead of Columbus, Cabot, Magellan, and Vespucci. England itself expanded as explorers and colonizers, such as Frobisher, Davis, Gilbert, Raleigh, Grenville, Drake, and others, carried the English flag into many distant lands and seas; as English trade and commerce expanded with the opening of new markets and new sources of supply; as English sea power grew to protect the trading routes and fend off rivals, particularly Spain, the defeat of whose Invincible Armada in 1588 greatly advanced English national pride at home, and power and prestige abroad.

The world of ideas changed and expanded, too. The rediscovery and reinterpretation of the classics, with their broad and humane view of life, gave a new direction and impetus to secular education. During the Middle Ages theology had dominated education, but now the language, literature, and philosophy of the ancient world, the practical arts of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and training in morals, manners, and gymnastics assumed the major roles in both school and university—in other words, an education that fitted one for life in the world here and now replaced one that looked rather to the life hereafter. Not that the spiritual culture of man was neglected. Indeed, it took on a new significance, for as life in this world acquired new meaning and value, religion assumed new functions, and new vitality to perform them, as the bond between the Creator and a new kind of creation.

It was, of course, the old creation—man and nature—but it was undergoing great changes. Some of these

we have already seen, but the greatest was in man's conception of himself and his place in nature. The Mediaeval view of man was generally not an exalted one. It saw him as more or less depraved, fallen from Grace as a result of Adam's sin; and the things of this world, which was also "fallen," as of little value in terms of his salvation. Natural life was thought of mainly as a preparation for man's entry into Eternity. But Renaissance thought soon began to rehabilitate man, nature, and the things of this life. Without denying man's need for Grace and the value of the means of salvation provided by the Church, men came gradually to accept the idea that there were "goods," values, "innocent delights" to be had in the world here and now, and that God had given them for man to enjoy. Man himself was seen no longer as wholly vile and depraved, incapable even of desiring goodness, but rather as Shakespeare saw him in *Hamlet:*

> What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!

And this is the conception of man that permeates Elizabethan thought and literature. It does not mean that man is incorruptible, immune to moral weakness and folly. Shakespeare has his villains, cowards, and fools. But man is none of these by nature; they are distortions of the true form of man. Nature framed him for greatness, endowed him with vast capacities for knowledge, achievement, and delight, and with

aspirations that may take him to the stars. "O brave new world, That has such people in 't!"

The chief object of man's aspiring mind is now the natural world, whose "wondrous architecture," says Marlowe's Tamburlaine, our souls strive ceaselessly to comprehend, "Still climbing after knowledge infinite." Hamlet, too, speaks of "this goodly frame, the earth . . . this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire." No longer the ruins of a fallen paradise and the devil's, nature is seen as man's to possess, her beauty and wonder to be sought after and enjoyed, her energies to be controlled and used—as Bacon expressed it, "for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate."

It was, indeed, a very stirring time to be alive in. New vistas were breaking upon the human mind and imagination everywhere. It was a time like spring, when promise, opportunity, challenge, and growth appeared where none had been dreamed of before. Perhaps this is why there is so much poetry of springtime in the age of Shakespeare.

HIS THEATRE

There were many theatres, or playhouses, in Shakespeare's London. The first was built in 1576 by James Burbage and was called the *Theatre*. It was built like an arena, with a movable platform at one end, and had no seats in the pit, but had benches in the galleries that surrounded it. It was built of wood, and cost about £200. Other famous playhouses of Shakespeare's time, for the most part similarly constructed, included the Curtain, the Bull, the Rose, the Swan, the Fortune, and, most famous of them all, the Globe.

It was built in 1599 by the sons of James Burbage, and it was here that most of Shakespeare's plays were performed. Since more is known about the Globe than most of the others, I shall use it as the basis of the brief account that follows of the Elizabethan playhouse.

As its name suggests, the Globe was a circular structure (the second Globe, built in 1614 after the first burned down, was octagonal), and was open to the sky, somewhat like a modern football or baseball stadium, though much smaller. It had three tiers of galleries surrounding the central "yard" or pit, and a narrow roof over the top gallery. But most interesting from our viewpoint was the stage—or rather *stages*—which was very different from that of most modern theatres. These have the familiar "picture-frame" stage: a raised platform at one end of the auditorium, framed by curtains and footlights, and viewed only from the front like a picture. Shakespeare's stage was very different.

The main stage, or *apron* as it was called, jutted well out into the pit, and did not extend all the way across from side to side. There was an area on either side for patrons to sit or stand in, so that actors performing on the apron could be viewed from three sides instead of one. In addition, there was an inner stage, a narrow rectangular recess let into the wall behind the main stage. When not in use it could be closed by a curtain drawn across in front; when open it could be used for interior scenes, arbor scenes, tomb and anteroom scenes and the like. On either side of this inner stage were doors through which the main stage was entered. Besides the inner and outer

stages there were no fewer than four other areas where the action of the play, or parts of it, might be performed. Immediately above the inner stage, and corresponding to it in size and shape, was another room with its front exposed. This was the upper stage, and was used for upstairs scenes, or for storage when not otherwise in use. In front of this was a narrow railed gallery, which could be used for balcony scenes, or ones requiring the walls of a castle or the ramparts of a fortress. On either side of it and on the same level was a window-stage, so-called because it consisted of a small balcony enclosed by windows that opened on hinges. This permitted actors to stand inside and speak from the open windows to others on the main stage below. In all, it was a very versatile multiple stage and gave the dramatist and producer much more freedom in staging than most modern theatres afford. It is interesting to note that some of the new theatres today have revived certain of the features of the Elizabethan stage.

Very little in the way of scenery and backdrops was used. The dramatist's words and the imagination of the audience supplied the lack of scenery. No special lighting effects were possible since plays were performed in the daylight that streamed in through the unroofed top of the three-tiered enclosure that was the playhouse. Usually a few standard stage props were on hand: trestles and boards to form a table, benches and chairs, flagons, an altar, artificial trees, weapons, a man's severed head, and a few other items. Costumes were usually elaborate and gorgeous, though no attempt was made to reproduce the dress of the time and place portrayed in the play.

Play production in Shakespeare's time was clearly very different from that of ours, but we need have no doubts about the audience's response to what they saw and heard on stage. They came, they saw, and the dramatist conquered, for they kept coming back for more and more. And despite the opposition that the theatre encountered from Puritans and others, who thought it the instrument of Satan, the theatre in Shakespeare's time flourished as one of the supreme glories of a glorious age.

—DAVID G. PITT
Memorial University of Newfoundland

INTRODUCTION TO
Macbeth

"MACBETH" AS A VISION OF HISTORY

One of the briefest works in the Shakespearean canon, *Macbeth* was first acted in 1606. The author was at the height of his powers as a creator of tragic drama: *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *King Lear* had already appeared; *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus* were to follow. While it is not a history play in the sense of the *Henry VI-Richard III* or *Richard II-Henry IV* cycles *Macbeth* takes its characters and situations from history, or rather from that historical grab bag Shakespeare found so useful, Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1578). Our present drama is no history play chiefly because it was written not so much to discern a pattern in past events as to illuminate the life of a single individual, Macbeth. It is true that we do find history treated in this play, just as an individual is defined in *Richard II*, but what is emphasized in tragedy is the individual, while in a chronicle play a pattern of the past is presented.

Shakespeare found Holinshed's *Chronicles* useful, which does not mean they were slavishly followed. Instead, the facts (such as they were) were altered to suit the drama's needs. Thus, to present some examples, King Duncan becomes an aged, saintly monarch, and not the younger, somewhat indecisive

ruler he was; Banquo serves as Macbeth's conscience, a figure who must be snuffed out if Macbeth is to reign peacefully, instead of an accomplice in the murder of the king. And, of course, the appearance of the ghostly Banquo at the feast is the playwright's invention.

Why was this done? Because Shakespeare was wise enough to take from this history of a man who murdered his way to a crown the situations and characters he needed, and rework them in such a fashion as to show a man's losing of his own soul. This is not a falsification of fact, but instead a creative use of fact to illuminate certain aspects of human nature. This is what the philosopher Aristotle was getting at when he declared that poetry was more philosophic than history. That is, our play tells us more about life than history because, while a recitation of facts about Macbeth's reign teaches us about that period alone, *Macbeth* tells us what happens to all of us who yield to those forces within ourselves urging us to gain power at any cost. Perhaps another way of seeing this is to note that art tells "lies" in order to get at a universal truth. In this case, the facts of Holinshed are altered to present a portrait of a man who in his ruthlessness and ambition represents someone all of us could become.

"MACBETH" AS CONDENSED ACTION

With these considerations in mind, we can understand why the play is as brief as it is, why it moves as quickly as it does. It is about a man whose surrender to his ambition leads him to commit foul,

treacherous, and cruel acts only to find that the fruits of these deeds are bitter and lead to despair and destruction. The "message" of *Macbeth* is nothing so simple as Crime Does Not Pay. Crime does pay—Macbeth gains total power—but crime pays also in coin not looked for: futility and wretchedness. The Macbeth who in the final act cries that life "is a tale/Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,/Signifying nothing" is already dead in soul. Macduff merely lops off the head of a corpse.

If this is what the play shows, it does not show it as a continuing process, but in stages. In describing a journey, we do not, unless we wish to be boring, recall the moving, but the stages. "Then we reached Winnipeg, then Calgary," and so forth. We needn't describe the space between—an audience naturally assumes that if we passed from A to B, we covered the in-between. This is what happens in the condensed action of *Macbeth:* the despair that is Macbeth's in Act V is not something that came over him in the intermission between Acts IV and V. Instead, we assume that the new act represents a new stage in the life of the regicide-King, a stage beyond that reached in Act IV. In the same manner, the hardened killer in Act IV has reached a stage beyond that of the nervous beginner of the preceding act. The author is giving the high points of his subject's descent into hell, and leaving out those in-betweens which do not, in this case, really matter. The advantages of such a method are obvious: we have a fast-moving drama in which one significant event follows upon the heels of another. This telescoping of a decades-long moral process enables us to see clearly the di-

rection of events, in the same manner as films which speed up the observation of a plant's growth give us a better notion of where things are going than a day-to-day observation can. This is not to deride such observation, or to sneer at the minute dissection of a moral process, such as is superbly done in the novels of George Eliot or Henry James. But we can see what *Macbeth is* by noting also what it is *not*. It is this rapid movement of significant events which renders necessary the comic relief of the Porter's monologue in Act II, Scene iii. This offers a break between two stages of Macbeth's existence—the faithful vassal of Duncan and his perjured successor. We have seen the murderer; now we shall see him as an increasingly callous one—to grant a resting place between, we have the Porter's grim jesting.

In *Macbeth* a lengthy process is stopped and displayed at a few stages in order to pound us with the impact of fast-breaking events. The play is not history, but an employment of some historical happenings for dramatic purposes; it is not action, but the judicious condensation of action into a selection of high points.

"MACBETH" AS WHEEL

The play opens with a restoration of order—the defeat of the rebel Thane of Cawdor, along with his Scandinavian and Irish allies, by King Duncan's forces. The bravest of those fighting on the side of order has been Macbeth, Thane of Glamis. Yet it will be he who plunges Scotland again into disorder by Duncan's murder, the usurpation of supreme power, and tyrannical rule. Finally, order is re-

stored as Macduff kills the usurper and Malcolm, the rightful king, comes to rule. Disorder is not succeeded by further disorder, but by a return to peace and harmony. The remedy presented for the kingdom's ills is no new system of rule, but a return to a proper expression of the traditional manner. *Macbeth* is not a modern play; it does not condemn society. Instead, it sees the disorder in society as stemming from disorderly individuals. The solution lies not in the rethinking of the political structure, but in the removal of evil humors from the social body. In the play we move not from old order to destruction of the old order to new order, but from old, to disorder, to reassertion of old order. The movement of the plot is that of a wheel swinging full circle, and our peace and calm of mind at the end should be tempered by the knowledge that the wheel which has swung once will swing again, that disorder cannot be permanently banished. But the same image gives comfort—the wheel always comes to rest eventually at the point of order.

"MACBETH" AS RIDER OF THE WHEEL

Shakespeare's era had a metaphor for the role luck plays in life—the wheel of fortune. Fortune did not follow Divine Law—fortune was a lawless process—but had its own whims. The man who rose through luck, who stayed on the wheel and rode it to the top of its arc, would also fall through bad luck and remain on the wheel as it proceeded downward. A wise man would follow God's law, and not surrender himself to fortune. Such a surrender would not only involve him in turbulence and lawlessness,

but, after raising him to the top, would destroy him. When the wounded soldier (II, ii) informs King Duncan that Fortune "showed like a rebel's whore," he means that Fortune acted as usual—displayed herself as treacherous and unfaithful. The fortune who sells herself to us will sell herself to others.

Macbeth involves himself in a process similar to what fortune's wheel symbolizes when he takes to heart the words of the Witches, or Weird Sisters. They are called weird, not because they are spooky, but because they are allied with fate, destiny, even luck, *wyrd* being an Old English word with these meanings. These creatures do not play the game of life according to our mortal rules; they represent a world existing alongside the world we wish always to live in. The world we wish to live in is one of order and harmony, and sometimes we do live in it. Just as often, however, we live in one of confusion and lawlessness, or at least lawless according to our concepts of law. When we are troubled, this lawless world seems as sensible as the lawful one, and thus the Witches are correct in announcing to Macbeth that he shall be Thane of Cawdor and King. Of course, they are correct because Macbeth makes them so. They open to him the possibilities for supreme power and, later, the means by which it may be preserved. Disregarding all notions of law and order, Macbeth attempts to realize these possibilities. Thus he places himself in the hands of fortune, and at the mercy of its whims.

Banquo realizes (I, iii) that "to win us to our harm,/The instruments of Darkness tell us truths";

his companion does not, and because the Weird Sisters keep feeding him plausible information, Macbeth comes to feel he can suffer no harm. He has erred on two counts: 1) surrendering himself to the forces of ambition within himself, he has become subject to the treacherous ways of the world in which the Sisters dwell; 2) he has forgotten that the breaks cannot come his way forever. Once on the wheel, no one gets off until the descent has been made and the rider crushed. When told by the Sisters that his rule will last until Birnam Wood moves to Dunsinane Castle, and that no man born of woman can kill him, Macbeth rejoices in his seeming invulnerability. As usual, the Sisters were correct, but this time in an underhanded manner. Crime pays, but not always as we wish; the dreams of successful sinning are correct, but not always in the manner we assume. When we surrender to such dreams—and while Shakespeare personifies them in the Weird Sisters, we know they exist in Macbeth and in all of us—we are bound by their insane rules until they break us.

In the play's cyclic pattern of order-disorder-order, Macbeth operates in the middle, during the cycle of disorder, riding the wheel of evil and amoral luck until it has both exalted and crushed him. If he appears at times trapped, even not accountable for his actions, it is because he *is* trapped, but by the consequences of his own deeds. Because a consistent course soon traps the evildoer, Macbeth at times appears the monkey, and Fate the organ grinder. But Macbeth made that fate. The Sisters told him he could be king; he well knew the blackness of the

means for attaining the crown, and chose to adopt them. In time, the Weird Sisters became for Macbeth a habit, as in Act III, Scene iv, when he repairs to them for a restocking of his resources for evil. Just as the narcotics addict's fix is an intensification of, rather than escape from, his habit, so do Macbeth's journeys to the Sisters confirm him in his madness. Each trip marks a further hardening in wickedness, as well as greater dependence upon the ambiguous counsels offered. This is the bondage, the surrender to a lawless Fate, that Macbeth has achieved by his yielding to his "vaulting ambition" (I, vii).

CHARACTER GROUPINGS IN "MACBETH"

One of the means of examining the characterization in the drama is to observe the manner in which differing characters throw light on one another by their actions, thus forming themselves into groups. One may, for example, view Banquo as the Dr. Jekyll aspect of Macbeth, and Lady Macbeth as the Mr. Hyde of her husband. It is Banquo who warns against the initial counsel of the Weird Sisters, and his appearance (to Macbeth alone) at the feast is the final confrontation by the murderer with the conscience he has attempted to stifle. Lady Macbeth incites her husband to the murder of King Duncan, and displays ingenuity in fabricating evidence which will throw the blame upon others. But once she has set her husband in motion, she is unable to stand the pace and grows mad beneath her burden of guilt. The evil in Macbeth's soul, once it reached its fulfillment, exceeds that of his wife. Like her hus-

band, she has begun a process whose end—which she cannot foresee—is self-destruction. At the play's end, with Banquo and Lady Macbeth dead, Macbeth is an empty husk who discerns no pattern in life beyond a succession of passing instants—"tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow." This is death-in-life; this is Hell, and it is of Macbeth's own making.

Macduff is a loyal vassal, as was Macbeth once, who enables his king to attain power but does not attempt to usurp it. Lady Macduff as a force for good forms a contrast with Lady Macbeth. Yet both die horribly. The difference is that Lady Macduff dies because she is innocent and therefore unable to cope with a topsy-turvy world, while Lady Macbeth engineers her own destruction by mastering too well the lessons such a world can teach. Lady Macduff's death seems useless, but out of it will come her husband's deepened resolve to remove the usurper from the throne. Lady Macbeth's death further advances the dissolution of her husband into the soulless wreck whose sole pleasure remains the Hitlerian one of attempting to drag the rest of the world down with him. He does not succeed in this final aim, but he does take young Siward with him.

The two kings whose reigns begin and end the play, Duncan and Malcolm, resemble each other in their personal goodness. Yet the youth has about him a worldly prudence necessary for the office of Kingship, as is shown by his testing of Macduff's loyalty in Act IV, Scene iii. Had Duncan possessed a like shrewdness, Macbeth could not have so easily plunged Scotland into anarchy.

THE LOSING GAME

Through its rapidly moving train of events, its picture of a man trapped in his own wickedness, and its character contrasts, *Macbeth* leaves its audience with a thoroughly unified impression. The potency of evil to which men surrender themselves is demonstrated by the addictive nature of Macbeth's murderous actions, while destruction comes upon both the guilty—the wicked couple—and the innocent—Duncan, Banquo, Lady Macduff and her children. In the play's first scene, the Weird Sisters prophesy of the battles being "lost and won"; in its second, Duncan proclaims that what the Thane of Cawdor "hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won." Macbeth "wins" both the title of Thane of Cawdor and the executed man's traitorous role. As the play proceeds, we see its protagonist as a compulsive gambler, increasing the stakes as he chances all on successive turns of fortune's wheel. Lady Macbeth, who had so much to do with the game's beginning, cannot bear the strain of this winning-that-is-loss. At the end we see the ravaged, pitiable gambler lose all. Macduff and Malcolm mercifully end the game and restore the realm to order.

If the simplest definition of tragedy be that it is the depiction of the process of the fall of a noble man, then we see in the tragedy of Macbeth the paradox of a figure sinking in the moral realm as he rises in the world of fortune and power politics. The wasted king at the play's end is not a tithe of the noble thane of the beginning. He "won" the kingship but lost it, and himself as well. This is

what tragedy is about—a life that is lost and won, where what may seem a signal victory is in truth the most thoroughgoing of defeats.

John Dennis Duffy
Trinity College
University of Toronto

STUDY QUESTIONS

ACT I

1. Relate the Witches' proverb, "Fair is foul, and foul is fair," in Scene i to the remainder of the play. Present three examples of the topsy-turvy nature of the world of this play.
2. By what means does Shakespeare, in Scene ii, present to us the background of events? Do you find the lengthy remarks of the Captain an effective or clumsy method of exposition?
3. Paraphrase in 100 words the soliloquy of Macbeth in Scene iii which begins "Two truths are told. . . ." Can we call this moment, in the words of Professor Wilson Knight, "the birth of evil in Macbeth"? Or can it be seen, instead, as Macbeth's realization of the evil tendencies within him?
4. Read carefully the soliloquy of Lady Macbeth in Scene v, beginning "The raven himself is hoarse." Give three instances of unnaturalness in it.
5. Describe in 200 words the character of Duncan. Discuss the various means by which we are given information about him.
6. What are some of the feelings of her husband upon which Lady Macbeth in Scene vii plays in order to bring him round to her views?
7. Which of the two is here the stronger personality, Lady Macbeth or her husband? Will this be reversed? How does this reversal of traditional roles

of husband and wife parallel other themes in the drama?

8. The act ends with Macbeth resolved to murder his king and guest. Have events moved too quickly? How have we been prepared for this? Describe three stages in Macbeth's increasing resolution to murder Duncan.

ACT II

1. What is the significance of the opening dialogue between Banquo and Fleance?
2. How real is the dagger which Macbeth sees before him? How real is the ghost of Banquo in Act III, Scene iv? What do these apparitions reveal about the character of Macbeth?
3. Lady Macbeth is unable to murder Duncan, her husband to cry "Amen" to a blessing—discuss the significance of these events. Which personality displays greater resolution here?
4. What is the significance of the knocking at the gate in Scene iii? (Interested students may wish to read Thomas DeQuincey's classic essay, "On the knocking at the gate in *Macbeth*"). Compare this knocking with the bell-ringing in scene one.
5. The Porter in his monologue talks much of equivocating. Can this be applied to any of the characters in the drama?
6. Is Lady Macbeth's faint genuine or feigned?
7. The old man's blessing of the Thane of Rosse in the final couplet of this act has been judged by Professor E. K. Chambers to be the man's correct

judgment of Rosse as "a mere time-server." Discuss this, keeping in mind Rosse's behavior in Act IV, Scene ii.

8. Has the role Macduff has played in this act foreshadowed his role in subsequent events?

ACT III

1. Analyze the process by which Macbeth explains the necessity for Banquo's removal. Compare it with his debate over murdering Duncan. How has Macbeth changed?
2. In Scene ii we begin to see a shift in the relationship between husband and wife. How does Macbeth demonstrate his new-found hardness?
3. Compare the references to night in this scene to those in Act I, Scene v.
4. How does Macbeth's conduct at the banquet restore briefly the relationship with his wife of the preceding acts?
5. Analyze the process by which Macbeth in this scene determines to repair to the Weird Sisters. How logical does his resolution appear?
6. Compare the exposition of Scene vi with that of Act I, Scene ii. Which is the better handled?
7. In what manner do the events of Act III advance the theme of Macbeth's increasing subjection to the evil in him?
8. As the middle, or "bridge" act, Act III should combine elements both of what has been and what is to come. Is this in fact true of the act? If so, give three instances of this foreshadowing of future events.

ACT IV

1. The Witches speak in rhyme in Scene i, and elsewhere in the drama. Why?
2. What is there in Macbeth's attitude toward the Sisters that we have not previously encountered? Who is ruling whom?
3. What does the reply of Lennox to his master's questions tell us about the reality of the Witches?
4. How does the conclusion of Scene i advance Macbeth another stage along his path? In what manner will the resolution he makes hasten his downfall?
5. Macduff's son: smart-aleck, or wise beyond his years?
6. Is Malcolm's testing of Macduff in Scene iii fair or underhanded? How necessary was it? Describe the character of Malcolm as revealed in this scene.
7. Macduff harnesses his grief to his anger. What does this reveal about his character? Does this scene prepare us for the role he is to play in the final act?
8. Act IV should leave us ready for the *dénouement* (the ultimate outcome of the plot). Does it in fact do this? Do any further significant revelations need to be made to us?

ACT V

1. Locate, in the remarks Lady Macbeth makes in her sleepwalking, at least six references to previous happenings in the play.

2. In what ways have we been prepared for Lady Macbeth's madness?
3. What is the significance of the ill-temper Macbeth shows his servants in Scene iii?
4. What does Macbeth's dialogue with the doctor reveal about his present state of mind? Is it what we would expect of him at this time? Why?
5. What does Macbeth mean in Scene v by saying that Lady Macbeth "should have died hereafter"? Paraphrase the passage briefly, and relate its initial remark to the remainder.
6. What does Macbeth's resolution at the conclusion of this scene reveal of his character? Compare this with the conclusion of Scene viii.
7. What are Macbeth's various reasons for not wishing to fight Macduff? Can we sympathize with them? In what sort of mental attitude does Macbeth die? What has he learned?
8. Compare Siward's emotions over the death of his son with Macduff's in Act IV, Scene iii. What does this demonstrate about the concept of manliness in *Macbeth*? How does Macbeth live up to such a concept?

General Questions

1. Discuss whether or not there are any scenes which could be removed from the play without harming it.
2. Supposedly, a tragedy should have for its principal character a hero. Discuss the ways in which Macbeth is heroic.
3. A large portion of *Macbeth* takes place at night.

Does this tie in with any theme of the play? Locate in the drama a dozen examples of imagery referring either to night, darkness, or powers associated with night and darkness.

4. Discuss whether or not, as the play proceeds, Macbeth is exerting a greater control over the people around him. What significance does this have in the drama?
5. Discuss in an essay any of the following in *Macbeth:*
   a) the function of the Porter
   b) atmosphere and mood
   c) imagery dealing with unnatural phenomena
   d) imagery dealing with animal behavior
   e) love
   f) kingship

   Be sure to discuss these topics in terms of the play as a whole.
6. Discuss to what degree the visions in *Macbeth* are real, and compare them from this standpoint with the appearances of the Weird Sisters.
7. Compare and/or contrast the characters of the drama who are murdered. Consider whether or not they share any common traits.
8. Give the speaker and occasion of each of the following passages, noting also its meaning and relevance to the action, as well as the insights it offers into the speaker:
   a) Naught's had, all's spent,
      Where our desire is got without content:
      'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,
      Than, by destruction, dwell in doubtful joy.

b) But in these cases,
We still have judgement here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague th'inventor: this even-handed Justice
Commends th'ingredience of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips.

c) Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed Temple, and stole thence
The life o' th' building.

d) Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world; where to do harm
Is often laudable; to do good, sometime
Accounted dangerous folly . . .

e) Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
Raze out the written troubles of the brain;
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuft bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

MACBETH

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

DUNCAN, *king of Scotland.*

MALCOLM,
DONALBAIN, } *his sons.*

MACBETH,
BANQUO, } *generals of the King's army.*

MACDUFF,
LENNOX,
ROSS,
MENTEITH,
ANGUS,
CAITHNESS, } *noblemen of Scotland.*

FLEANCE, *son to Banquo.*

SIWARD, *earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces.*

YOUNG SIWARD, *his son.*

SEYTON, *an officer attending on Macbeth.*

BOY, *son to Macduff.*

AN ENGLISH DOCTOR.

A SCOTCH DOCTOR.

A SERGEANT.

A PORTER.

AN OLD MAN.

LADY MACBETH.

LADY MACDUFF.

GENTLEWOMAN *attending on Lady Macbeth.*

HECATE.

THREE WITCHES.

APPARITIONS.

LORDS, GENTLEMEN, OFFICERS, SOLDIERS, MURDERERS, ATTENDANTS, *and* MESSENGERS.

SCENE—*in the end of the fourth Act in England; through the rest of the play in Scotland.*

Macbeth

ACT 1

ACT I

As THE play opens, three hellish spirits, the Weird Sisters, announce their coming appointment with Macbeth. The scene shifts to a battlefield, where a soldier reports to Duncan, King of Scotland, the success of his armies against invaders supported by rebels. Macbeth, Thane of Glamis, has been Duncan's bravest captain, and is awarded the title of the executed leader of the rebels, the Thane of Cawdor. Macbeth and his friend Banquo then encounter the witches, who predict the Thaneship of Cawdor and the crown of Scotland for Macbeth, and royal descendants for Banquo. The arrival of the news that Macbeth now is lord of Cawdor confirms the prophecy and Macbeth is unsettled by the thoughts that come to his mind of the way the crown might be gained. Duncan congratulates Macbeth, and determines to visit his castle. Lady Macbeth, upon hearing her husband's account of what has taken place, rejoices in her opportunity and determines to instill in her husband the resolution to murder Duncan. Duncan having arrived at Inverness, Lady Macbeth taunts her husband with charges of cowardice until he is willing to murder the king. She also contrives a way of throwing the guilt upon the king's servants.

ACT I. Scene I.

An open place.

Thunder and lightning. Enter three WITCHES.

FIRST WITCH.

When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH.

When the hurlyburly's[1] done,
When the battle's lost and won.

THIRD WITCH.

That will be ere the set of sun.

FIRST WITCH.

Where the place?

SECOND WITCH.

Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH.

There to meet with Macbeth.

FIRST WITCH.

I come, Graymalkin![2]

SECOND WITCH.

Paddock[3] calls:—anon!

ALL.

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] **hurlyburly:** noisy commotion.
[2] **Graymalkin:** a gray cat.
[3] **Paddock:** a toad.

Scene II.

A camp near Forres.

Alarum within. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, *with* ATTENDANTS, *meeting a bleeding* SERGEANT.

DUNCAN.

What bloody man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.

MALCOLM.

This is the sergeant,
Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
'Gainst my captivity.—Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king thy knowledge of the broil [1]
As thou didst leave it.

SERGEANT.

Doubtful it stood;
As two spent[2] swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art.[3] The merciless Macdonwald—
Worthy to be a rebel, for, to that,
The multiplying villainies of nature
Do swarm upon him—from the western isles
Of kerns[4] and gallowglasses[5] is supplied;
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore: but all's too weak;
For brave Macbeth,—well he deserves that name,—
Disdaining fortune, with his brandisht steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion,[6]
Carved out his passage till he faced the slave;

---

[1] **broil**: quarrel. [2] **spent**: exhausted. [3] **art**: skill. [4] **kerns**: the rude foot soldiers of the Irish. [5] **gallowglasses**: heavy-armed foot soldiers, better trained than the kerns. [6] **minion**: favorite; darling.

Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to th'chops,[1]
And fixt his head upon our battlements.

DUNCAN.

O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

SERGEANT.

As whence the sun 'gins his reflection[2]
Shipwracking storms and direful thunders break;
So from that spring, whence comfort seem'd to come,
Discomfort swells. Mark, king of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had, with valour arm'd,
Compell'd these skipping[3] kerns to trust their heels,
But the Norweyan lord,[4] surveying vantage,[5]
With furbisht arms and new supplies of men,
Began a fresh assault.

DUNCAN.

Dismay'd not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

SERGEANT.

Yes;
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks;[6]
So they
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:

---

[1] **unseam'd him from the nave to th' chops:** cut him open from the navel to the jaw. [2] **'gins his reflection:** begins to rise (from the East). [3] **skipping:** retreating. [4] **Norweyan lord:** King of Norway. [5] **surveying vantage:** seeing an opportunity. [6] **double cracks:** double charges of ammunition.

Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorize another Golgotha,[1]
I cannot tell:—
But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.

DUNCAN.

So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
They smack of honour both.—Go get him surgeons.
[*Exit* SERGEANT, *attended.*
Who comes here?

Enter ROSS.

MALCOLM.

The worthy thane[2] of Ross.

LENNOX.

What haste[3] looks through his eyes! So should he look
That seems to speak things strange.

ROSS.

God save the king!

DUNCAN.

Whence camest thou, worthy thane?

ROSS.

From Fife, great king;
Where the Norweyan banners flout[4] the sky
And fan our people cold.[5] Norway[6] himself,
With terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor
The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;[7]
Till that Bellona's[8] bridegroom, lapt in proof,[9]
Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit: and, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.

---

[1] **Golgotha:** the hill where Christ was crucified. [2] **thane:** chief of a Scottish clan; an Anglo-Saxon nobleman. [3] **haste:** sense of urgency. [4] **flout:** defy; mock. [5] **fan our people cold:** fill our people with dread. [6] **Norway:** the king of Norway. [7] **dismal conflict:** ill-omened battle. [8] **Bellona:** Roman goddess of war. [9] **lapt in proof:** encased in armor.

DUNCAN.

Great happiness!

ROSS.

That now
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition;[1]
Nor would we deign[2] him burial of his men
Till he disbursed, at Saint Colme's-inch,[3]
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

DUNCAN.

No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest:[4]—go pronounce his present[5] death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

ROSS.

I'll see it done.

DUNCAN.

What he hath lost noble[6] Macbeth hath won. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A heath.

Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES.

FIRST WITCH.

Where hast thou been, sister?

SECOND WITCH.

Killing swine.

THIRD WITCH.

Sister, where thou?

FIRST WITCH.

A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munch't, and munch't, and munch't:—
'Give me,' quoth I:
'Aroint thee,[7] witch!' the rump-fed [8] ronyon[9] cries.

---

[1] **composition:** pact; treaty. [2] **deign:** allow. [3] **Saint Colme's-inch:** the island of St. Columba, now Inchcolm, an islet in the Firth of Forth. [4] **bosom interest:** close and intimate concern. [5] **present:** immediate. [6] **noble:** brave. [7] **Aroint thee:** away with you. [8] **rump-fed:** fat-rumped. [9] **ronyon:** mangy, scabby woman.

Her husband's to Aleppo[1] gone, master o'th'Tiger:[2]
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And, like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

SECOND WITCH.

I'll give thee a wind.

FIRST WITCH.

Th'[3]art kind.

THIRD WITCH.

And I another.

FIRST WITCH.

I myself have all the other;
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I'th'shipman's card.[4]
I will drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;[5]
He shall live a man forbid:
Weary se'n[6]nights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak,[7] and pine:
Though his bark[8] cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.—
Look what I have.

SECOND WITCH.

Show me, show me.

FIRST WITCH.

Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wrackt as homeward he did come. [*Drum within.*

THIRD WITCH.

A drum, a drum!
Macbeth doth come.

---

[1] **Aleppo:** a city in Syria famous as a trading center. [2] **Tiger:** the name of a ship. [3] **th':** thou. [4] **shipman's card:** compass chart. [5] **pent-house lid:** eyelid. [6] **se'n:** seven. [7] **peak:** a very small quantity (Scottish); synonymous here with dwindle and pine. [8] **bark:** ship.

ALL.

The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters[1] of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine:—
Peace!—the charm's wound up.

Enter MACBETH *and* BANQUO; SOLDIERS *at some distance.*

MACBETH.

So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

BANQUO.

How far is't call'd to Forres?—What are these
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
That look not like th'inhabitants o'th'earth,
And yet are on't?—Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips:—you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

MACBETH.

Speak, if you can;—what are you?

FIRST WITCH.

All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

SECOND WITCH.

All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

THIRD WITCH.

All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!

BANQUO.

Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair?—I'th'name of truth,

---

[1] Posters: rapid travelers.

Are ye fantastical,[1] or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace,[2] and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal:—to me you speak not:
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow, and which will not,
Speak, then, to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favours nor your hate.

FIRST WITCH.

Hail!

SECOND WITCH.

Hail!

THIRD WITCH.

Hail!

FIRST WITCH.

Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

SECOND WITCH.

Not so happy, yet much happier.

THIRD WITCH.

Thou shalt get[3] kings, though thou be none:
So, all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

FIRST WITCH.

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH.

Stay, you imperfect[4] speakers, tell me more:
By Sinel's[5] death I know I am thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous[6] gentleman; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
You owe this strange intelligence? or why

---

[1] **fantastical:** creatures of fantasy or imagination.
[2] **present grace:** immediate honor.
[3] **get:** beget.
[4] **imperfect:** unclean; deformed.
[5] **Sinel:** Macbeth's father.
[6] **prosperous:** healthy; flourishing.

Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge[1] you.

[WITCHES *vanish.*

BANQUO.

The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them:—whither are they vanisht?

MACBETH.

Into the air; and what seem'd corporal [2] melted
As breath into the wind.—Would they had stay'd!

BANQUO.

Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner?

MACBETH.

Your children shall be kings.

BANQUO.

You shall be king.

MACBETH.

And thane of Cawdor too,—went it not so?

BANQUO.

To th'selfsame tune and words.—Who's here?

Enter ROSS *and* ANGUS.

ROSS.

The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success: and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his: silenced with that,
In viewing o'er the rest o'th'selfsame day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
Strange images of death.[3] As thick as hail

---

[1] **charge:** command.
[2] **corporal:** material; embodied.
[3] **Strange images of death:** fearsome faces.

Came post with post;[1] and every one did bear
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
And pour'd them down before him.

ANGUS.

We are sent
To give thee, from our royal master, thanks;
Only to herald [2] thee into his sight, not pay thee.

ROSS.

And, for an earnest[3] of a greater honour,
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor:
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.

BANQUO [*aside*].

What, can the devil speak true?

MACBETH.

The thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me
In borrow'd robes?

ANGUS.

Who was the thane lives yet;
But under heavy judgement bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined
With those of Norway, or did line[4] the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labour'd in his country's wrack, I know not;
But treasons capital,[5] confest and proved,
Have overthrown him.

MACBETH [*aside*].

Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!
The greatest is behind.[6]—[*to* ROSS *and* ANGUS]
Thanks for your pains.—
[*aside to* BANQUO] Do you not hope your children shall be

---

[1] **came post with post:** one messenger followed hot on the heels of another. [2] **herald:** announce. [3] **earnest:** a token of honors to come. [4] **line:** back. [5] **treasons capital:** treason was a capital offense punishable by death. [6] **behind:** yet to come.

kings,
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me
Promised no less to them?

BANQUO [*aside to* MACBETH].

That, trusted home,[1]
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange:
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness[2] tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence.[3]—
Cousins, a word, I pray you.

MACBETH [*aside*].

Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling[4] act
Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.—
[*aside*] This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill, cannot be good:—if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest[5] of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
And make my seated [6] heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? [7] Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings:
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single[8] state of man, that function
Is smother'd in surmise; and nothing is
But what is not.

BANQUO.

Look, how our partner's rapt.[9]

---

[1] **trusted home:** trusted completely. [2] **instruments of darkness:** witches. [3] **deepest consequence:** in those things that are of the greatest importance to us. [4] **swelling:** developing. [5] **earnest:** proof. [6] **seated:** settled. [7] **Against the use of nature:** unnaturally. [8] **single:** weak. [9] **rapt:** wholly absorbed; attentive to the exclusion of all else.

MACBETH [*aside*].

If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me,
Without my stir.[1]

BANQUO.

New honours come upon him,
Like our strange[2] garments, cleave[3] not to their mould
But with the aid of use.

MACBETH [*aside*].

Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

BANQUO.

Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon[4] your leisure.

MACBETH.

Give me your favour:[5]—my dull brain was wrought
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are register'd where every day I turn
The leaf to read them.[6]—Let us toward the king.—
[*aside to* BANQUO] Think upon what hath chanced; and, at more time,
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak
Our free hearts[7] each to other.

BANQUO [*aside to* MACBETH].

Very gladly.

MACBETH [*aside to* BANQUO].

Till then, enough.—Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] **stir** aid. [2] **strange:** unaccustomed. [3] **cleave:** fit. [4] **stay upon:** wait on. [5] **favour:** indulgence. [6] **where every day I turn/ The leaf to read them:** with me constantly in my mind. [7] **speak/ Our free hearts:** speak openly and frankly.

Scene IV.

Forres. A room in the palace.

Flourish. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, *and* ATTENDANTS.

DUNCAN.

Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission[1] yet return'd?

MALCOLM.

My liege,
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke
With one that saw him die: who did report,
That very frankly he confest his treasons;
Implored your highness' pardon; and set forth
A deep repentance: nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it; he died
As one that had been studied [2] in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he owed,
As 'twere a careless trifle.

DUNCAN.

There's no art
To find the mind's construction[3] in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, *and* ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me: thou art so far before,[4]
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine! only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

---

[1] **Those in commission:** those in charge.
[2] **studied:** rehearsed.
[3] **mind's construction:** a person's thoughts.
[4] **before:** ahead.

MACBETH.

The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties; and our duties
Are to your throne and state children and servants;
Which do but what they should by doing every thing
Safe toward your love and honour.

DUNCAN.

Welcome hither:
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour
To make thee full of growing.—Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known
No less to have done so; let me infold thee
And hold thee to my heart.

BANQUO.

There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.

DUNCAN.

My plenteous joys,
Wanton[1] in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow.—Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know,
We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest, Malcolm; whom we name hereafter
The Prince of Cumberland: which honour must
Not unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers.—From hence to Inverness,
And bind us[2] further to you.

MACBETH.

The rest is labour, which is not used for you:[3]
I'll be myself the harbinger,[4] and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach:
So, humbly take my leave.

---

[1] **Wanton:** unrestrained.
[2] **bind us:** put us in your debt.
[3] **which is not used for you:** which you are not used to.
[4] **harbinger:** an officer who rides ahead of the king and secures lodgings for the royal retinue.

DUNCAN.

My worthy Cawdor!

MACBETH [*aside*].

The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
Let not light see my black and deep desires:
The eye wink at[1] the hand; yet let that be,
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [*Exit.*

DUNCAN.

True, worthy Banquo,—he is full so valiant;
And in his commendations I am fed,—
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome:
It is a peerless kinsman. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Inverness. A room in MACBETH*'s castle.*

Enter LADY MACBETH *alone, with a letter.*

LADY MACBETH.

"They met me in the day of success; and I have learn'd by the perfect'st report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burnt in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanisht. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives[2] from the king, who all-hail'd me "Thane of Cawdor;" by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referr'd me to the coming on of time, with "Hail, king that shalt be!" This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of great-

---

[1] wink at: choose not to see.

[2] missives: messengers.

ness, that thou mightst not lose the dues[1] of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell.'
Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o'th'milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way:[2] thou wouldst be great;
Art not without ambition; but without
The illness[3] should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,
That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win: thou'ldst have, great Glamis,
That which cries 'Thus thou must do, if thou have it;
And that which rather thou dost fear to do
Than wishest should be undone.' Hie[4] thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,[5]
Which fate and metaphysical [6] aid doth seem
To have thee crown'd withal.

Enter a MESSENGER.

What is your tidings?

MESSENGER.

The king comes here to-night.

LADY MACBETH.

Thou'rt mad to say it:
Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,
Would have inform'd for preparation.

MESSENGER.

So please you, it is true:—our thane is coming:

---

[1] dues: rewards.
[2] nearest way: commit the murder himself.
[3] illness: wickedness.
[4] Hie: hurry.
[5] golden round: the crown of Scotland.
[6] metaphysical: supernatural.

One of my fellows had the speed of him;[1]
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.

LADY MACBETH.

Give him tending;
He brings great news. [*Exit* MESSENGER.
The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal [2] thoughts, unsex me here;
And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood,
Stop up th'access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature[3]
Shake my fell [4] purpose, nor keep peace between
Th'effect and it! [5] Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murd'ring ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall [6] thee in the dunnest[7] smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry 'Hold, hold!'

Enter MACBETH.

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.[8]

MACBETH.

My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.

---

[1] **had the speed of him:** outstripped him. [2] **mortal:** murderous. [3] **compunctious visitings of nature:** pangs of conscience. [4] **fell:** deadly; cruel. [5] **keep peace between/Th'effect and it:** let no feeling of pity come between my cruel purpose and its commission. [6] **pall:** shroud. [7] **dunnest:** blackest. [8] **in the instant:** at the present moment.

LADY MACBETH.

And when goes hence?

MACBETH.

To-morrow, as he purposes.[1]

LADY MACBETH.

O, never

Shall sun that morrow see!
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters:—to beguile the time,[2]
Look like the time;[3] bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under't. He that's coming
Must be provided for: and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch;[4]
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway[5] and masterdom.

MACBETH.

We will speak further.

LADY MACBETH.

Only look up clear;
To alter favour[6] ever is to fear:
Leave all the rest to me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI.

The same. Before MACBETH*'s castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, *and* ATTENDANTS.

DUNCAN.

This castle hath a pleasant seat;[7] the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself

---

[1] **purposes:** plans. [2] **to beguile the time:** to deceive men. [3] **look like the time:** appear natural. [4] **dispatch:** method of execution. [5] **sovereign away:** royal rule. [6] **alter favour:** change one's facial expression. [7] **pleasant seat:** pleasant location.

Unto our gentle senses.

BANQUO.

This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet,[1] does approve,
By his lov'd mansionry,[2] that the heavens' breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage,[3] but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant[4] cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed
The air is delicate.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

DUNCAN.

See, see, our honour'd hostess!—
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
Now you shall bid God 'ild [5] us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

LADY MACBETH.

All our service
In every point twice done, and then done double,
Were poor and single[6] business to contend
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,
And the late dignities heapt up to them,
We rest your hermits.[7]

DUNCAN.

Where's the thane of Cawdor?
We coursed him at the heels,[8] and had a purpose
To be his purveyor:[9] but he rides well;
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp[10] him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.

---

[1] **martlet:** the common European martin. [2] **lov'd mansionry:** favorite nesting place. [3] **coign of vantage:** protecting corner. [4] **procreant:** fruitful; pertaining to procreation. [5] **'ild:** yield. [6] **single:** feeble. [7] **hermits:** beadsmen who were bound by allegiance, or pay, to pray for another. [8] **coursed him at the heels:** followed close behind him. [9] **purveyor:** one who arranges in advance for the reception of a royal party. [10] **holp:** help.

LADY MACBETH.

Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt,[1]
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still [2] to return your own.

DUNCAN.

Give me your hand;
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,
And shall continue our graces[3] towards him.
By your leave, hostess. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII.

The same. A lobby in MACBETH*'s castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter a SEWER,[4] *and divers* SERVANTS *with dishes and service, over the stage. Then enter* MACBETH.

MACBETH.

If it were done—when 'tis done—then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if th'assassination
Could trammel up[5] the consequence, and catch,
With his surcease,[6] success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'ld jump the life to come.[7] But in these cases
We still have judgement here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague th'inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends[8] th'ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,

---

[1] **compt:** trust; reckoning. [2] **Still:** Ever (ready). [3] **graces:** honors. [4] **Sewer:** steward. [5] **trammel up:** net up. [6] **surcease:** death. [7] **We'ld jump the life to come:** we would disregard the Day of Judgment. [8] **Commends:** offers.

Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties[1] so meek, hath been
So clear[2] in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;[3]
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin,[4] horsed
Upon the sightless[5] couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind.—I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,
And falls on th'other.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

How now! what news?

LADY MACBETH.

He has almost supt: why have you left the chamber?

MACBETH.

Hath he askt for me?

LADY MACBETH.

Know you not he has?

MACBETH.

We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions[6] from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

---

[1] **faculties:** powers.
[2] **clear:** blameless.
[3] **taking-off:** murder.
[4] **cherubin:** angels of divine justice.
[5] **sightless:** invisible.
[6] **Golden opinions:** valuable advice.

LADY MACBETH.

Was the hope drunk
Wherein you drest yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'
Like the poor cat i'th'adage? [1]

MACBETH.

Prithee, peace:
I dare do all that may become a man;[2]
Who dares do more is none.[3]

LADY MACBETH.

What beast was't, then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst[4] do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere,[5] and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you.[6] I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluckt my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dasht the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

MACBETH.

If we should fail?

---

[1] **cat i'th'adage:** "The cat would eate fish, and would not wet her feet."—Heywood's *Proverbes*. [2] **all that may become a man:** all that it is right for a man to do. [3] **none:** not a man; less than a man (an animal). [4] **durst:** dared. [5] **adhere:** were in accord. [6] **unmake:** unnerve.

LADY MACBETH.

We fail:
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,[1]
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep,—
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him,—his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail [2] so convince,[3]
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume,[4] and the receipt of reason
A limbeck[5] only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
Th'unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy[6] officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell? [7]

MACBETH.

Bring forth men-children only;
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
When we have markt with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber, and used their very daggers,
That they have done't?

LADY MACBETH.

Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?

MACBETH.

I am settled and bend up[8]
Each corporal agent[9] to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] **the sticking-place:** a steady resolve. [2] **wassail:** carousal. [3] **convince:** subdue. [4] **fume:** haze. [5] **limbeck:** an alembic; the cap of a still to catch the distillation or fumes. [6] **spongy:** sodden with drink. [7] **quell:** murder. [8] **bend up:** strain (like a a bow). [9] **Each corporal agent:** all my bodily powers.

Macbeth

ACT 2

ACT II

It is now midnight, and Banquo tells his son Fleance of his uneasiness. They bid Macbeth good night; he is then troubled by the vision of a gory dagger. He is able to overcome this, and goes forth to murder the king. Lady Macbeth smears the servants in the room with Duncan's blood and the couple scurry to their chamber as a knocking is heard. The sleepy Porter delivers a grimly comic monologue before he opens the gate to admit the nobles, Macduff and Lennox. They have come to waken Duncan and, finding him dead, rouse the castle. Lady Macbeth faints as her husband relates to all how, in his anger, he killed the blood-smeared grooms who must have murdered the king. Thus are the witnesses disposed of. Malcolm and Donalbain, Duncan's sons, determine to flee from so suspicious a situation. Their flight seems to implicate them in their father's murder. The act ends as Macduff and the Thane of Rosse discuss the coming coronation of Macbeth.

ACT II. Scene I.

Inverness. Court of MACBETH*'s castle.*

Enter BANQUO, *and* FLEANCE *with a torch before him.*

BANQUO.

How goes the night, boy?

FLEANCE.

The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

BANQUO.

And she goes down at twelve.

FLEANCE.

I take't, 'tis later, sir.

BANQUO.

Hold, take my sword:—there's husbandry[1] in heaven,
Their candles are all out:—take thee that too.—
A heavy summons[2] lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep:—merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!—Give me my sword.—
Who's there?

Enter MACBETH, *and a* SERVANT *with a torch.*

MACBETH.

A friend.

BANQUO.

What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess[3] to your officers:[4]
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up
In measureless content.

---

[1] **husbandry:** care of domestic affairs; hence, thrift, economy.
[2] **heavy summons:** weariness.
[3] **largess:** gifts.
[4] **officers:** servants' quarters.

MACBETH.

Being unprepared,
Our will became the servant to defect;[1]
Which else should free have wrought.

BANQUO.

All's well.—
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have show'd some truth.

MACBETH.

I think not of them:
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.

BANQUO.

At your kind'st leisure.

MACBETH.

If you shall cleave to my consent,[2]—when 'tis,
It shall make honour for you.

BANQUO.

So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised,[3] and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsell'd.[4]

MACBETH.

Good repose the while!

BANQUO.

Thanks, sir: the like to you! [*Exeunt* BANQUO *and* FLEANCE.

MACBETH.

Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed. [*Exit* SERVANT.

---

[1] **Our will became the servant to defect:** of necessity, our entertainment was defective; we were not free to carry out our wishes.
[2] **cleave to my consent:** ally yourself with me, under my orders.
[3] **My bosom franchised:** affections free.
[4] **I shall be counsell'd:** I shall listen to you.

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee:—
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling[1] as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed [2] brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st[3] me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o'th'other senses,
Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still;
And on thy blade and dudgeon[4] gouts[5] of blood,
Which was not so before.—There's no such thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes.—Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse[6]
The curtain'd sleep; now witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's[7] offerings; and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's[8] ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost.—Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it.—Whiles I threat, he lives:

---

[1] **sensible/ To feeling**: tangible; perceptible. [2] **heat-oppressed**: fevered. [3] **marshall'st**: led. [4] **dudgeon**: handle of a dagger. [5] **gouts**: drops. [6] **abuse**: deceive. [7] **Hecate**: goddess of magic and darkness. [8] **Tarquin**: his rape of Lucretia caused his family's expulsion from Rome; son of the seventh and last legendary king of Rome.

Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

[*A bell rings.*

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell. [*Exit.*

Scene II.

The same.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

LADY MACBETH.

That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;
What hath quencht them hath given me fire.—Hark!—Peace!
It was the owl that shriekt, the fatal bellman,[1]
Which gives the stern'st good-night.—He is about it:
The doors are open; and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge[2] with snores: I have drugg'd their possets,[3]
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

MACBETH [*within*].

Who's there? what, ho!

LADY MACBETH.

Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,
And 'tis not done:—th'attempt, and not the deed,
Confounds[4] us.—Hark!—I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em.—Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.—My husband!

---

[1] **fatal bellman:** the town crier who tolled the bell for a condemned man the night before his execution.
[2] **charge:** responsibility.
[3] **possets:** hot, spiced drinks usually served before going to bed.
[4] **confounds:** destroys.

Enter MACBETH.

MACBETH.

I have done the deed.—Didst thou not hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH.

I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?

MACBETH.

When?

LADY MACBETH.

Now.

MACBETH.

As I descended?

LADY MACBETH.

Ay.

MACBETH.

Hark!—
Who lies i'th'second chamber?

LADY MACBETH.

Donalbain.

MACBETH.

This is a sorry sight. [*Looking on his hands.*

LADY MACBETH.

A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH.

There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one cried 'Murder!'
That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them:
But they did say their prayers, and addrest them
Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH.

There are two lodged together.

MACBETH.

One cried 'God bless us!' and 'Amen!' the other;
As they had seen me, with these hangman's hands.
Listening their fear, I could not say 'Amen!'
When they did say 'God bless us!'

LADY MACBETH.

Consider it not so deeply.[1]

MACBETH.

But wherefore could not I pronounce 'Amen'?
I had most need of blessing, and 'Amen'
Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH.

These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

MACBETH.

Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep,'—the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleave[2] of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast,—

LADY MACBETH.

What do you mean?

MACBETH.

Still it cried 'Sleep no more!' to all the house:
'Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more,—Macbeth shall sleep no more!'

LADY MACBETH.

Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think

---

[1] **deeply:** seriously.

[2] **ravell'd sleave:** tangled skein; sleave was a coarse silk, called "sleave silk."

So brainsickly of things.—Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness[1] from your hand.—
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: go carry them, and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

MACBETH.

I'll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.

LADY MACBETH.

Infirm of purpose! [2]
Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures: 'tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild [3] the faces of the grooms withal;
For it must seem their guilt. [*Exit. Knock within.*

MACBETH.

Whence is that knocking? [4]
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes!
Will all great Neptune's[5] ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,[6]
Making the green one red.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

LADY MACBETH.

My hands are of your colour; but I shame
To wear a heart so white.[7] [*knock.*] I hear a knocking
At the south entry:—retire we to our chamber:
A little water clears us of this deed:

---

[1] **filthy witness:** bloody evidence. [2] **Infirm of purpose:** weak-willed. [3] **gild:** smear with blood. [4] **that knocking:** Macduff and Lennox are knocking at the south gate. [5] **Neptune:** god of the sea. [6] **incarnadine:** make red. [7] **heart so white:** cowardly; bloodless.

How easy is it, then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended.[1]—[*knock.*] Hark! more knocking:
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion[2] call us,
And show us to be watchers:[3]—be not lost
So poorly[4] in your thoughts.

MACBETH.

To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself. [*Knock.*
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

The same.

Enter a PORTER. *Knocking within.*

PORTER.

Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have old[5] turning the key.—[*knock.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i'th'name of Belzebub?[6] Here's a farmer that hang'd himself on th'expectation of plenty:[7] come in time; have napkins enow[8] about you; here you'll sweat for't. [*knock.*] Knock, knock! Who's there, i'th'other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator that could swear in both the scales against either scale: who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come in, equivocator.—[*knock.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose:[9] come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose.[10]—[*knock.*] Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are

---

[1] **Your constancy/ Hath left you unattended:** your firmness has forsaken you. [2] **occasion:** circumstance. [3] **watchers:** awake. [4] **poorly:** dejectedly. [5] **old:** much; plenty of. [6] **Belzebub:** the devil. [7] **expectation of plenty:** a glutted market. [8] **napkins:** handkerchiefs; **enow:** the plural of enough. [9] **French hose:** French hose being very short and straight, a tailor would have a hard time stealing cloth from his customers (French hose were breeches). [10] **goose:** an iron.

you?—But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to th'everlasting bonfire.[1]—[*knock.*] Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter.

[*Opens the gate.*

Enter MACDUFF *and* LENNOX.

MACDUFF.

Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

PORTER.

Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock:[2] and drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things.

MACDUFF.

What three things does drink especially provoke?

PORTER.

Marry, sir, nose-painting,[3] sleep, and urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance: therefore, much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to, and not stand to; in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him.

MACDUFF.

I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.

PORTER.

That it did, sir, i'the very throat on me: but I requited[4] him for his lie; and, I think, being too strong for him, though he took up my legs[5] sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.[6]

---

[1] **everlasting bonfire:** hell.
[2] **second cock:** early morning.
[3] **nose-painting:** a red nose from drinking; brandy nose.
[4] **requited:** repaid.
[5] **took up my legs:** unsteadied him.
[6] **made a shift to cast him:** managed to throw him.

MACDUFF.

Is thy master stirring?—
Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

Enter MACBETH.

LENNOX.

Good morrow, noble sir.

MACBETH.

Good morrow, both.

MACDUFF.

Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

MACBETH.

Not yet.

MACDUFF.

He did command me to call timely on him:
I have almost slipt the hour.

MACBETH.

I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF.

I know this is a joyful trouble to you;
But yet 'tis one.

MACBETH.

The labour we delight in physics[1] pain.
This is the door.

MACDUFF.

I'll make so bold to call,
For 'tis my limited[2] service. [*Exit.*

LENNOX.

Goes the king hence to-day?

MACBETH.

He does: he did appoint so.

LENNOX.

The night has been unruly: where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down:[3] and, as they say,

---

[1] **physics**: cures.
[2] **limited**: appointed.
[3] **chimneys were blown down**: wind came down the chimneys (downdrafts).

Lamentings heard i'th'air; strange screams of death;
And prophesying, with accents terrible,
Of dire combustion[1] and confused events
New hatcht to th'woeful time: the obscure bird [2]
Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

MACBETH.

'Twas a rough night.

LENNOX.

My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow[3] to it.

Enter MACDUFF.

MACDUFF.

O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!

MACBETH *and* LENNOX.

What's the matter?

MACDUFF.

Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope[4]
The Lord's anointed temple,[5] and stole thence
The life o'th'building!

MACBETH.

What is't you say? the life?

LENNOX.

Mean you his majesty?

MACDUFF.

Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon:[6]—do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt* MACBETH *and* LENNOX.

---

[1] **combustion:** uproar; disturbance. [2] **obscure bird:** night owl. [3] **fellow:** equal. [4] **ope:** open. [5] **Lord's anointed temple:** the king's body. [6] **Gorgon:** Perseus turned his enemies to stone by making them look on the Gorgon's head.

Awake, awake!—
Ring the alarum-bell:—murder and treason!—
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself! up, up, and see
The great doom's image![1] Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,[2]
To countenance[3] this horror! [*Bell rings.*

Enter LADY MACBETH.

LADY MACBETH.

What's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!

MACDUFF.

O gentle lady,
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell.

Enter BANQUO.

O Banquo, Banquo,
Our royal master's murder'd!

LADY MACBETH.

Woe, alas!
What, in our house?

BANQUO.

Too cruel any where.—
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
And say it is not so.

Enter MACBETH, LENNOX, *and* ROSS.

MACBETH.

Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had lived a blessed time; for, from this instant,
There's nothing serious in mortality:[4]

---

[1] The great doom's image: a sight as terrible as that of the Day of Judgment.
[2] sprites: spirits.
[3] countenance: be in keeping with.
[4] nothing serious in mortality: no greatness in human life.

All is but toys: renown and grace is dead;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees[1]
Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN.

DONALBAIN.

What is amiss?

MACBETH.

You are, and do not know't:
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopt,—the very source of it is stopt.

MACDUFF.

Your royal father's murder'd.

MALCOLM.

O, by whom?

LENNOX.

Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't:
Their hands and faces were all badged[2] with blood;
So were their daggers, which, unwiped, we found
Upon their pillows:
They stared, and were distracted; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.

MACBETH.

O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.

MACDUFF.

Wherefore did you so?

MACBETH.

Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
The expedition[3] of my violent love
Outrun[4] the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood;
And his gasht stabs lookt like a breach in nature

---

[1] **lees:** dregs.
[2] **badged:** marked (the badge of murder).
[3] **expedition:** haste.
[4] **Outrun:** outran.

For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steept in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breecht with gore:[1] who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make's love known?

LADY MACBETH.

Help me hence, ho!

MACDUFF.

Look to the lady.

MALCOLM [*aside to* DONALBAIN].

Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument[2] for ours?

DONALBAIN [*aside to* MALCOLM].

What should be spoken here, where our fate,
Hid in an auger-hole,[3] may rush, and seize us?
Let's away;
Our tears are not yet brew'd.

MALCOLM [*aside to* DONALBAIN].

Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.

BANQUO.

Look to the lady:—

[LADY MACBETH *is carried out.*

And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples[4] shake us:
In the great hand of God I stand; and thence
Against the undivulged pretence[5] I fight
Of treasonous malice.

MACDUFF.

And so do I.

---

[1] **Unmannerly breecht with gore:** covered with blood, instead of being properly sheathed.
[2] **argument:** subject of conversation.
[3] **auger-hole:** small, obscure place of concealment.
[4] **scruples:** misgivings.
[5] **pretence:** intention; purpose.

ALL.

So all.

MACBETH.

Let's briefly[1] put on manly readiness,[2]
And meet i'th'hall together.

ALL.

Well contented.

[*Exeunt all but* MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN.

MALCOLM.

What will you do? Let's not consort with them:
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office[3]
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

DONALBAIN.

To Ireland I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,[4]
The nearer bloody.

MALCOLM.

This murderous shaft that's shot
Hath not yet lighted; and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of[5] leave-taking,
But shift away:[6] there's warrant[7] in that theft
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Without MACBETH's *castle.*

Enter ROSS *and an* OLD MAN.

OLD MAN.

Threescore and ten I can remember well:
Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night

---

[1] **briefly:** quickly. [2] **put on manly readiness:** dress ourselves. [3] **office:** duty. [4] **blood:** blood relations (Macbeth and Duncan were cousins). [5] **dainty of:** particular about. [6] **shift away:** steal away undetected. [7] **warrant:** safety; refuge.

Hath trifled [1] former knowings.[2]

ROSS.

Ha, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threatens his bloody stage:[3] by th'clock 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the traveling lamp:[4]
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it?

OLD MAN.

'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawkt at and kill'd.

ROSS.

And Duncan's horses,—a thing most strange and certain,—
Beauteous and swift, the minions[5] of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out.
Contending[6] 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.

OLD MAN.

'Tis said they eat each other.

ROSS.

They did so,—to th'amazement of mine eyes,
That lookt upon't.—Here comes the good Macduff.

Enter MACDUFF.

How goes the world, sir, now?

---

[1] **trifled:** made trivial. [2] **knowings:** experiences. [3] **Threatens his bloody stage:** frowns upon the earth where such horrors can take place. [4] **the traveling lamp:** the sun. [5] **minions:** favorites; darlings; from the French word *mignon*. [6] **Contending:** rebelling.

MACDUFF.

Why, see you not?

ROSS.

Is't known who did this more than bloody deed?

MACDUFF.

Those that Macbeth hath slain.

ROSS.

Alas, the day!
What good could they pretend? [1]

MACDUFF.

They were suborn'd:[2]
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stoln away and fled; which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.

ROSS.

'Gainst nature still:
Thriftless[3] ambition, that wilt ravin up[4]
Thine own life's means!—Then 'tis most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

MACDUFF.

He is already named; and gone to Scone[5]
To be invested.

ROSS.

Where is Duncan's body?

MACDUFF.

Carried to the Colme-kill,[6]
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

ROSS.

Will you to Scone?

MACDUFF.

No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

---

[1] **pretend**: hope for; intend. [2] **suborn'd**: hired or persuaded unlawfully. [3] **Thriftless**: unbridled. [4] **ravin up**: devour greedily. [5] **Scone**: the ancient town of Scone was situated about two and a half miles from Perth. All the Scottish kings from Alexander I (1107) down to James II were crowned at Scone Abbey. The famous "stone of Scone," now forms part of the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey. [6] **Colme-kill**: the island of Iona.

ROSS.

Well, I will thither.

MACDUFF.

Well, may you see things well done there,—adieu,—
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new! [1]

ROSS.

Farewell, father.

OLD MAN.

God's benison[2] go with you; and with those
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes! [*Exeunt.*

[1] **Lest our old robes sit easier than our new:** lest the new king be more oppressive than Duncan.
[2] **benison:** blessing.

Macbeth

ACT 3

ACT III

BANQUO now suspects Macbeth, and courteously declines a banquet invitation to himself and Fleance. Macbeth, troubled by the thoughts of his friend's royal descendants, hires murderers to kill both father and son. Fleance, however, escapes. Meanwhile, Lady Macbeth has become troubled in her guilty eminence, and is disturbed by her husband's plans to murder his possible rivals. At the banquet the king hears of Fleance's escape and sees the ghost of the murdered Banquo at his own place at table. The banquet breaks off in confusion as Lady Macbeth hurries the guests away and attempts to calm her husband. Upon hearing that Macduff has also absented himself from the feast, Macbeth plots evil against him and determines to seek out the Weird Sisters for further information. Hecate, queen over the powers of darkness, instructs the Sisters to confuse Macbeth, and Lennox and another noble recall the growing suspicions about Macbeth. They express hope in Macduff, who has fled to England to raise forces against Macbeth.

ACT III. Scene I.

Forres. The palace.

Enter BANQUO.

BANQUO.

Thou hast it now,—king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women[1] promised; and, I fear,
Thou play'dst most foully for't: yet it was said
It should not stand [2] in thy posterity;
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them,—
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine,—
Why, by the verities on thee made good,[3]
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope? But, hush; no more.

Sennet sounded. Enter MACBETH, *as king;* LADY MACBETH, *as queen;* LENNOX, ROSS, LORDS, LADIES, *and* ATTENDANTS.

MACBETH.

Here's our chief guest.

---

[1] weird women: witches.
[2] stand: be carried on.
[3] made good: proved.

LADY MACBETH.

If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-thing unbecoming.

MACBETH.

To-night we hold a solemn[1] supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.

BANQUO.

Let your highness
Command upon me; to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.

MACBETH.

Ride you this afternoon?

BANQUO.

Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH.

We should have else desired your good advice—
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous[2]—
In this day's council; but we'll take't to-morrow.
Is't far you ride?

BANQUO.

As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.

MACBETH.

Fail not our feast.

BANQUO.

My lord, I will not.

MACBETH.

We hear, our bloody[3] cousins are bestow'd

---

[1] **solemn**: formal; ceremonious.
[2] **grave and prosperous**: weighty (deeply considered) and to our advantage.
[3] **bloody**: guilty.

In England and in Ireland; not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention: but of that to-morrow;
When therewithal we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

BANQUO.

Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon's.[1]

MACBETH.

I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell. [*Exit* BANQUO.
Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night; to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone: while then, God be with you!
[*Exeunt all but* MACBETH *and an* ATTENDANT.
Sirrah, a word with you: attend those men
Our pleasure?

ATTENDANT.

They are, my lord, without the palace-gate.

MACBETH.

Bring them before us. [*Exit* ATTENDANT.
To be thus is nothing;
But to be safely thus.—Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd; 'tis much he dares;
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear: and, under him,

---

[1] our time does call upon's: the shortness of time presses upon us.

My Genius[1] is rebuked; as, it is said,
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters,
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him; then, prophet-like,
They hail'd him father to a line of kings:
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrencht with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed [2] my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel [3]
Given to the common enemy of man,[4]
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,[5]
And champion me to th'utterance! [6]—Who's there?

Enter ATTENDANT, *with two* MURDERERS.

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.

[*Exit* ATTENDANT.

Was is not yesterday we spoke together?

FIRST MURDERER.

It was, so please your highness.

MACBETH.

Well then, now
Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know
That it was he, in the times past, which held you
So under fortune; which you thought had been
Our innocent self: this I made good [7] to you
In our last conference, past in probation with you,[8]
How you were borne in hand,[9] how crost, the instruments,
Who wrought with them, and all things else that might

---

[1] Genius: ruling spirit. [2] filed: defiled. [3] eternal jewel: immortal soul. [4] common enemy of man: the devil. [5] into the list: join the contest. [6] to th'utterance: to the death (*à l'outrance*—to extremity). [7] made good: proved. [8] past in probation with you: spent in proving to you. [9] borne in hand: deceived; flattered with false hopes.

To half a soul and to a notion crazed
Say 'Thus did Banquo.'

FIRST MURDERER.

You made it known to us.

MACBETH.

I did so; and went further, which is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature,
That you can let this go? Are you so gospell'd,[1]
To pray for this good man and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand [2] hath bow'd you to the grave,
And beggar'd yours for ever?

FIRST MURDERER.

We are men, my liege.

MACBETH.

Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
As hounds, and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves, are clept[3]
All by the name of dogs: the valued file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed;[4] whereby he does receive
Particular addition,[5] from the bill
That writes them all alike: and so of men.
Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not i'th'worst rank of manhood, say't;
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off;
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.

---

[1] **gospell'd:** governed by the gospels.
[2] **heavy hand:** tyrannical rule.
[3] **clept:** called, or named.
[4] **closed:** endowed.
[5] **particular addition:** honors apart from.

SECOND MURDERER.

I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Hath so incensed, that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

FIRST MURDERER.

And I another,
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,[1]
That I would set[2] my life on any chance,
To mend it, or be rid on't.

MACBETH.

Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS.

True, my lord.

MACBETH.

So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,[3]
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life:[4] and though I could
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight,
And bid my will avouch[5] it, yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall [6]
Who I myself struck down: and thence it is,
That I to your assistance do make love;[7]
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.

SECOND MURDERER.

We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.

FIRST MURDERER.

Though our lives—

---

[1] **tugg'd with fortune:** beaten down by wrestling with fortune. [2] **set:** stake. [3] **distance:** a fencing term denoting the distance between two opponents. [4] **thrusts/ Against my near'st of life:** threatens my very existence. [5] **avouch:** answer for; justify. [6] **wail his fall:** grieve over his death. [7] **make love:** appeal.

MACBETH.

Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most,
I will advise you where to plant yourselves;
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o'th'time,[1]
The moment on't;[2] for't must be done to-night,
And something from the palace;[3] always thought
That I require a clearness:[4] and with him—
To leave no rubs[5] nor botches in the work—
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart:[6]
I'll come to you anon.

BOTH MURDERERS.

We are resolved, my lord.

MACBETH.

I'll call upon you straight:[7] abide within.

[*Exeunt* MURDERERS.

It is concluded:—Banquo, thy soul's flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The palace.

Enter LADY MACBETH *and a* SERVANT.

LADY MACBETH.

Is Banquo gone from court?

SERVANT.

Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

LADY MACBETH.

Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.

---

[1] **the perfect spy o'th'time:** the exact time when you may look for him. [2] **on't:** for it. [3] **something from the palace:** at some distance from the palace. [4] **clearness:** freedom from suspicion. [5] **rubs:** hindrance; impediments; a term in bowling. [6] **Resolve yourselves apart:** make up your minds by yourselves. [7] **straight:** immediately.

SERVANT.

Madam, I will. [*Exit.*

LADY MACBETH.

Naught's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,
Than, by destruction, dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter MACBETH.

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making;
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without[1] all remedy
Should be without regard: what's done is done.

MACBETH.

We have scotcht[2] the snake, not kill'd it:
She'll close,[3] and be herself; whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint,[4] both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly: better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy.[5] Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy,[6] nothing,
Can touch him further.

LADY MACBETH.

Come on; gentle my lord,

---

[1] **without**: beyond. [2] **scotcht**: wounded; cut. [3] **close**: heal. [4] **frame of things disjoint**: the orderly earth be split by dissension (out of joint). [5] **restless ecstasy**: emotional conflict. [6] **levy**: troops.

Sleek o'er your rugged looks; be bright and jovial
Among your guests to-night.

MACBETH.

So shall I, love;
And so, I pray, be you: let your remembrance
Apply to Banquo; present him eminence,[1] both
With eye and tongue: unsafe the while that we
Must lave[2] our honours in these flattering streams;
And make our faces vizards[3] to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.

LADY MACBETH.

You must leave this.

MACBETH.

O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleance live.

LADY MACBETH.

But in them nature's copy's not eterne.[4]

MACBETH.

There's comfort yet; they are assailable;
Then be thou jocund:[5] ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd [6] flight; ere, to black Hecate's summons,
The shard-borne beetle[7] with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

LADY MACBETH.

What's to be done?

MACBETH.

Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,[8]
Till thou applaud the deed.—Come, seeling[9] night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;
And with thy bloody and invisible hand

---

[1] present him eminence: give him special attention. [2] lave: wash. [3] vizards: masks. [4] nature's copy's not eterne: that is, men have not been given life eternal. [5] jocund: merry. [6] cloister'd: confined. [7] shard-born: the horny wing-cases of the beetle were at one time called shards. [8] chuck: a term of endearment, corrupted from chick. [9] seeling: a term from falconry—blinding the falcon by passing a fine thread through its eyelids.

Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond [1]
Which keeps me pale!—Light thickens; and the crow
Makes wing to th'rooky[2] wood:
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.—
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still;
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill:
So, prithee, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

A park, with a gate leading to the palace.

Enter three MURDERERS.

FIRST MURDERER.

But who did bid thee join with us?

THIRD MURDERER.

Macbeth.

SECOND MURDERER.

He needs not our mistrust; since he delivers
Our offices,[3] and what we have to do,
To the direction just.[4]

FIRST MURDERER.

Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
Now spurs the lated [5] traveller apace
To gain the timely inn;[6] and near approaches
The subject of our watch.

THIRD MURDERER.

Hark! I hear horses.

BANQUO [*within*].

Give us a light there, ho!

SECOND MURDERER.

Then 'tis he: the rest

---

[1] that great bond: the witches' prophecy that Banquo's descendants, not Macbeth's, will rule. [2] rooky: frequented by rooks or crows. [3] offices: duties. [4] To the direction just: exactly as he (Macbeth) has directed. [5] lated: belated. [6] To gain the timely inn: to reach an inn in time, meaning early, before nightfall.

That are within the note of expectation[1]
Already are i'th'court.

FIRST MURDERER.

His horses go about.

THIRD MURDERER.

Almost a mile: but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to th'palace-gate
Make it their walk.

SECOND MURDERER.

A light, a light!

THIRD MURDERER.

'Tis he.

FIRST MURDERER.

Stand tc't.

Enter BANQUO, *and* FLEANCE *with a torch.*

BANQUO.

It will be rain to-night.

FIRST MURDERER.

Let it come down.

[*They assault* BANQUO.

BANQUO.

O, treachery!—Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou mayst revenge.—O slave! [*Dies.* FLEANCE *escapes.*

THIRD MURDERER.

Who did strike out the light?

FIRST MURDERER.

Was't not the way?

THIRD MURDERER.

There's but one down; the son is fled.

---

[1] within the note of expectation: on the list of expected guests.

SECOND MURDERER.

We have lost

Best half of our affair.

FIRST MURDERER.

Well, let's away, and say how much is done. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

A room of state in the palace.

Banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, LORDS, *and* ATTENDANTS.

MACBETH.

You know your own degrees,[1] sit down: at first
And last[2] the hearty welcome.

LORDS.

Thanks to your majesty.

MACBETH.

Ourself will mingle with society,[3]
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state;[4] but, in best time,
We will require her welcome.

LADY MACBETH.

Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

MACBETH.

See, they encounter thee[5] with their hearts' thanks.—
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i'th'midst:

Enter first MURDERER *to the door.*

Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure
The table round.—There's blood upon thy face.

MURDERER.

'Tis Banquo's, then.

---

[1] **degrees:** ranks (they are seated according to rank).
[2] **at first/ And last:** to all.
[3] **society:** the guests.
[4] **keeps her state:** remains in her chair of state at the head of the table.
[5] **encounter thee:** meet you.

MACBETH.

'Tis better thee without than he within.
Is he dispatcht?

MURDERER.

My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

MACBETH.

Thou art the best o'th'cut-throats: yet he's good
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil.[1]

MURDERER.

Most royal sir,
Fleance is scaped.

MACBETH.

Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect;
Whole[2] as the marble, founded [3] as the rock;
As broad and general as the casing air:[4]
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe? [5]

MURDERER.

Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.

MACBETH.

Thanks for that:
There the grown serpent lies; the worm,[6] that's fled,
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for th'present.—Get thee gone: to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again. [*Exit* MURDERER.

---

[1] nonpareil: unequaled. [2] Whole: unflawed. [3] founded: stable. [4] broad and general as the casing air: open and free as the surrounding air. [5] safe: safely out of the way. [6] worm: Fleance.

LADY MACBETH.

My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer:[1] the feast is sold
That is not often voucht, while 'tis a-making,[2]
'Tis given with welcome: to feed were best at home;[3]
From thence[4] the sauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting were bare without it.

MACBETH.

Sweet remembrancer!—
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,
And health to both!

LENNOX.

May't please your highness sit.

Enter the GHOST *of* BANQUO, *and sits in* MACBETH's *place.*

MACBETH.

Here had we now our country's hónour rooft,[5]
Were the graced person of our Banquo present;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance!

ROSS.

His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness
To grace us with your royal company.

MACBETH.

The table's full.

LENNOX.

Here is a place reserved, sir.

MACBETH.

Where?

---

[1] **cheer:** the usual welcome; hospitality. [2] **the feast is sold/ That is not often voucht while 'tis a-making:** that is, it is like buying food in an inn unless you frequently assure your guests that you are happy to entertain them. [3] **to feed were best at home:** just to eat would be better done at home. [4] **From thence:** away from home. [5] **country's honour rooft:** the noblest of the country under one roof.

LENNOX.

Here, my good lord. What is't that moves[1] your highness?

MACBETH.

Which of you have done this?

LORDS.

What, my good lord?

MACBETH.

Thou canst not say I did it: never shake
Thy gory locks at me.

ROSS.

Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not well.

LADY MACBETH.

Sit, worthy friends:—my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat;
The fit is momentary; upon a thought[2]
He will again be well: if much you note him,
You shall offend him, and extend his passion:[3]
Feed, and regard him not.—Are you a man?

MACBETH.

Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.

LADY MACBETH.

O proper stuff!
This is the very painting[4] of your fear:
This is the air-drawn[5] dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,[6]
Impostors to true fear,[7] would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authoriz'd [8] by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

---

[1] **moves:** disturbs. [2] **upon a thought:** swift as thought. [3] **passion:** fit. [4] **painting:** imagining. [5] **air-drawn:** formed out of the air. [6] **flaws and starts:** emotional upsets and fits. [7] **Impostors to true fear:** nerves, not genuine fear. [8] **Authoriz'd:** given on the authority of.

MACBETH.

Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?—
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.—
If charnel-houses and our graves must send
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites.[1] [GHOST *disappears.*

LADY MACBETH.

What, quite unmann'd [2] in folly?

MACBETH.

If I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH.

Fie, for shame!

MACBETH.

Blood hath been shed ere now, i'th'olden time,
Ere human statute purged the gentle weal,[3]
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
Too terrible for the ear: the time has been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders[4] on their crowns,
And push us from our stools: this is more strange
Than such a murder is.

LADY MACBETH.

My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

MACBETH.

I do forget:—
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
Then I'll sit down.—Give me some wine, fill full.—
I drink to th'general joy o'the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;

---

[1] **maws of kites:** the craws of scavenging birds.
[2] **unmann'd:** terrified.
[3] **purged the gentle weal:** eliminated the evils of society.
[4] **mortal murders:** fatal wounds.

Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,[1]
And all to all.

LORDS.

Our duties, and the pledge.

Enter GHOST.

MACBETH.

Avaunt! [2] and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation[3] in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with!

LADY MACBETH.

Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom: 'tis no other;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

MACBETH.

What man dare, I dare:
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros,[4] or the Hyrcan[5] tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble: or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert[6] with thy sword;
If trembling I inhibit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence! [GHOST *vanishes.*

Why, so;—being gone,
I am a man again.—Pray you, sit still.

LADY MACBETH.

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired [7] disorder.

MACBETH.

Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,

---

[1] **we thirst:** we would drink to Banquo's and everyone's health. [2] **Avaunt:** go away. [3] **speculation:** physical vision. [4] **arm'd rhinoceros:** armored rhinoceros. [5] **Hyrcan:** Hyrcana—an ancient province in Asia south and south-east of the Caspian Sea. [6] **dare me to the desert:** challenge me to man-to-man combat in a solitary place. [7] **admired:** amazing.

Without our special wonder? You make me strange
Even to the disposition that I owe,[1]
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blancht with fear.

ROSS.

What sights, my lord?

LADY MACBETH.

I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;
Question enrages him: at once, good night:—
Stand not upon the order of your going,[2]
But go at once.

LENNOX.

Good night; and better health
Attend his majesty!

LADY MACBETH.

A kind good night to all!

[*Exeunt all but* MACBETH *and* LADY MACBETH.

MACBETH.

It will have blood; they say blood will have blood:
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak;
Augurs,[3] and understood relations[4] have
By maggot-pies[5] and choughs and rooks[6] brought forth
The secret'st man of blood.—What is the night?

LADY MACBETH.

Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

MACBETH.

How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person
At our great bidding?

---

[1] **disposition that I owe:** my own nature. [2] **Stand not upon the order of your going:** forego the usual protocol of leaving according to rank. [3] **Augurs:** predictions. [4] **understood relations:** prophecies that have been fulfilled. [5] **maggot-pies:** magpies. [6] **choughs and rooks:** birds belonging to the crow family.

LADY MACBETH.

Did you send to him, sir?

MACBETH.

I hear it by the way; but I will send:
There's not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant fee'd.[1] I will to-morrow,
And betimes[2] I will, to the weird sisters go:
More shall they speak; for now I am bent[3] to know,
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,
All causes shall give way: I am in blood
Stept in so far, that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er:
Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;[4]
Which must be acted [5] ere they may be scann'd.[6]

LADY MACBETH.

You lack the season of all natures,[7] sleep.

MACBETH.

Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
Is the initiate fear, that wants hard use:[8]—
We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

A heath.

Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES, *meeting* HECATE.

FIRST WITCH.

Why, how now, Hecate! you look angerly.

HECATE.

Have I not reason, beldams[9] as you are,
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth

---

[1] **a servant fee'd:** a paid servant as spy. [2] **betimes:** early. [3] **bent:** determined. [4] **will to hand:** will be brought about. [5] **acted:** carried out. [6] **scann'd:** examined. [7] **season of all natures:** that which renews everyone. [8] **My strange and self-abuse/ Is the initiate fear, that wants hard use:** my self-deception is the fear of a novice who lacks the hardening experience of crime. [9] **beldams:** hags.

In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close[1] contriver of all harms,
Was never call'd to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful; who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now: get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron[2]
Meet me i'the morning: thither he
Will come to know his destiny:
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms, and every thing beside.
I am for the air; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end:
Great business must be wrought ere noon:
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound;[3]
I'll catch it ere it come to ground:
And that, distill'd by magic sleights,[4]
Shall raise such artificial sprites,[5]
As, by the strength of their illusion,
Shall draw him on to his confusion:[6]
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear:
And you all know security[7]
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[*Music and a song within*, 'Come away, come away,' &c.

Hark! I am call'd; my little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays[8] for me. [*Exit.*

---

[1] **close:** secret. [2] **Acheron:** In Greek mythology, the name is given to a river of Hades; later, it was used to designate the lower world. [3] **drop profound:** weighty drop. [4] **sleights:** artifices; trickery. [5] **sprites:** spirits. [6] **confusion:** destruction. [7] **security:** carelessness. [8] **stays:** waits.

FIRST WITCH.

Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back again. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

Forres. A room in the palace.

Enter LENNOX *and another* LORD.

LENNOX.

My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret further: only, I say,
Things have been strangely borne.[1] The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth:—marry, he was dead:—
And the right-valiant Banquo walkt too late;[2]
Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance kill'd,
For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought,[3] how monstrous
If was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? damned fact!
How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight,[4]
In pious rage, the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink and thralls[5] of sleep?
Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;
For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive
To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well: and I do think
That, had he Duncan's sons under his key,[6]—
As, an't please heaven, he shall not,—they should find
What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.

---

[1] **borne:** managed.
[2] **too late:** too late at night.
[3] **cannot want the thought:** cannot but think.
[4] **straight:** immediately.
[5] **thralls:** captives.
[6] **key:** power.

But, peace!—for from broad words,[1] and 'cause he fail'd
His presence[2] at the tyrant's feast, I hear,
Macduff lives in disgrace: sir, can you tell
Where he bestows[3] himself?

LORD.

The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,[4]
Lives in the English court; and is received
Of the most pious Edward [5] with such grace,
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect: thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward:[6]
That, by the help of these—with Him above
To ratify the work—we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights;
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives;
Do faithful homage, and receive free honours;—
All which we pine for now: and this report
Hath so exasperate the king, that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

LENNOX.

Sent he to Macduff?

LORD.

He did: and with an absolute 'Sir, not I,'
The cloudy[7] messenger turns me his back,
And hums, as who should say, 'You'll rue the time
That clogs[8] me with this answer.'

LENNOX.

And that well might
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel

---

[1] **from broad words:** on account of unrestrained words. [2] **fail'd/His presence:** failed to be present. [3] **bestows:** keeps. [4] **holds the due of birth:** withholds his birthright. [5] **the most pious Edward:** Edward the Confessor. [6] **Siward:** Earl of Northumberland. [7] **cloudy:** sullen. [8] **clogs:** slows.

Fly to the court of England, and unfold
His message ere he come; that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accurst!

LORD.

I'll send my prayers with him. [*Exeunt.*

Macbeth

ACT 4

ACT IV

As the act opens, the Weird Sisters are preparing the charm they are to use upon Macbeth. He arrives and, at his command, they conjure up visions counseling him to beware Macduff and to be ruthless, fearing no one born of woman. A third vision says that Birnam forest must move to Dunsinane Castle before Macbeth can be harmed, and Macbeth then sees a procession of the royal descendants of Banquo. Macbeth then hears from Lennox of Macduff's flight to England and determines to snuff out the lives of the rebel's family. The next scene shows us the innocent Lady Macduff and her son killed by Macbeth's henchmen. The scene then moves from Scotland to England, where Malcolm tests Macduff's loyalty by pretending to vices he does not possess. Macduff still possesses sufficient faith in Malcolm to see these vices as offset by virtues, and Malcolm reveals his true nature. The Thane of Rosse arrives with the news of the distress of Scotland under tyranny, and the murder of Macduff's family. This hardens the noble in his resolution to dethrone the usurper.

ACT IV. Scene I.

A cavern. In the middle, a caldron boiling.

Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES.

FIRST WITCH.

Thrice the brinded [1] cat hath mew'd.

SECOND WITCH.

Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined.

THIRD WITCH.

Harpier[2] cries:—'tis time, 'tis time.

FIRST WITCH.

Round about the caldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.—
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i'the charmed pot.

ALL.

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire, burn; and, caldron, bubble.

SECOND WITCH.

Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,

---

[1] brinded: brindled (diminutive of brinded); dark streaks or spots on a gray or tawny ground.
[2] Harpier: may be a corruption of "Harpy."

Adder's fork,[1] and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and howlet's[2] wing,—
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL.

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire, burn; and, caldron, bubble.

THIRD WITCH.

Scale of dragon; tooth of wolf;
Witches' mummy; maw and gulf [3]
Of the ravin'd [4] salt-sea shark;
Root of hemlock digg'd i'the dark;
Liver of blaspheming Jew;
Gall of goat; and slips of yew
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse;
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips;
Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,[5]—
Make the gruel thick and slab:[6]
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,[7]
For th'ingredients of our caldron.

ALL.

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire, burn; and, caldron, bubble.

SECOND WITCH.

Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Enter HECATE.

HECATE.

O, well done! I commend your pains;
And every one shall share i'the gains:
And now about the caldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,

---

[1] **Adder's fork:** snake's forked tongue. [2] **howlet:** owl. [3] **maw and gulf:** craw and gullet. [4] **ravin'd:** ravenous. [5] **drab:** low woman. [6] **slab:** slimy. [7] **chaudron:** entrails.

Enchanting all that you put in.

[*Music and a song*, 'Black Spirits,' &c.

[*Exit* HECATE.

SECOND WITCH.

By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes:—
Open, locks,
Whoever knocks!

Enter MACBETH.

MACBETH.

How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is't you do?

ALL.

A deed without a name.

MACBETH.

I conjure you, by that which you profess,—
Howe'er you come to know it,—answer me:
Though you untie[1] the winds, and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty[2] waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed [3] corn be lodged,[4] and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure
Of nature's germens tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken,—answer me
To what I ask you.

FIRST WITCH.

Speak.

SECOND WITCH.

Demand.

---

[1] **untie:** loose.
[2] **yesty:** foamy.
[3] **bladed:** in the blade; ripened.
[4] **lodged:** beaten down; flattened.

THIRD WITCH.

We'll answer.

FIRST WITCH.

Say, if th'hadst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters?

MACBETH.

Call 'em, let me see 'em.

FIRST WITCH.

Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow;[1] grease that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.

ALL.

Come, high or low;
Thyself and office deftly show!

Thunder. FIRST APPARITION: *an arm'd Head.*

MACBETH.

Tell me, thou unknown power,—

FIRST WITCH.

He knows thy thought:
Hear his speech, but say thou naught.

FIRST APPARITION.

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff;
Beware the thane of Fife.—Dismiss me:—enough. [*Descends.*

MACBETH.

Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution,[2] thanks;
Thou hast harpt[3] my fear aright:—but one word more,—

FIRST WITCH.

He will not be commanded: here's another,
More potent than the first.

Thunder. SECOND APPARITION: *a bloody Child.*

---

[1] **farrow:** litter of pigs.
[2] **caution:** warning.
[3] **harpt:** guessed.

SECOND APPARITION.

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!—

MACBETH.

Had I three ears, I'ld hear thee.

SECOND APPARITION.

Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends.*

MACBETH.

Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate:[1] thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

Thunder. THIRD APPARITION: *a Child crown'd, with a tree in his hand.*

What is this,
That rises like the issue of a king,
And wears upon his baby-brow the round
And top of sovereignty?[2]

ALL.

Listen, but speak not to't

THIRD APPARITION.

Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are;
Macbeth shall never vanquisht be, until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him. [*Descends.*

MACBETH.

That will never be:
Who can impress the forest; bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! [3] good!

---

[1] **take a bond of fate:** he will put it out of fate's power to break the promise.

[2] **the round/ And top of sovereignty:** the crown.

[3] **bodements:** prophecies.

Rebellion's head, rise never, till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature,[1] pay his breath
To time and mortal custom.—Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me,—if your art
Can tell so much,—shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

ALL.

Seek to know no more.

MACBETH.

I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know:—
Why sinks that caldron? and what noise is this? [*Hautboys.*

FIRST WITCH.

Show!

SECOND WITCH.

Show!

THIRD WITCH.

Show!

ALL.

Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart!

A show of eight KINGS, *the last with a glass in his hand;* BANQUO'S GHOST *following.*

MACBETH.

Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!
Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs:—and thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first:—
A third is like the former.—Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this?—A fourth?—Start, eyes!—
What, will the line stretch out to th'crack of doom?—

---

[1] **lease of nature:** span of life.

Another yet?—A seventh?—I'll see no more:—
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass[1]
Which shows me many more; and some I see
That twofold balls and treble sceptres[2] carry:
Horrible sight!—Now I see 'tis true;
For the blood-bolter'd [3] Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his.—What, is this so?

FIRST WITCH.

Ay, sir, all this is so:—but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?—
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show the best of our delights:
I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round;[4]
That this great king may kindly say
Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music. The* WITCHES *dance, and vanish.*

MACBETH.

Where are they? Gone?—Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye[5] accursed in the calendar!—
Come in, without there!

Enter LENNOX.

LENNOX.

What's your Grace's will?

MACBETH.

Saw you the weird sisters?

LENNOX.

No, my lord.

MACBETH.

Came they not by you?

LENNOX.

No, indeed, my lord.

---

[1] **glass:** mirror.
[2] **twofold balls and treble sceptres:** emblems of sovereignty.
[3] **blood-bolter'd:** hair clotted with blood.
[4] **antic round:** grotesque dancing hand in hand in a circle.
[5] **aye:** forever.

MACBETH.

Infected be the air whereon they ride;
And damn'd all those that trust them!—I did hear
The galloping of horse: who was't came by?

LENNOX.

'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word
Macduff is fled to England.

MACBETH.

Fled to England!

LENNOX.

Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH.

Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits:
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it:[1] from this moment
The very firstlings[2] of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o'th'sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace[3] him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool:
But no more sights!—Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Fife. A room in Macduff's *castle.*

Enter Lady Macduff, *her* son, *and* Ross.

LADY MACDUFF.

What had he done, to make him fly the land?

---

[1] The flighty purpose never is o'ertook/ Unless the deed go with it: so fleeting is purpose that it quickly dissipates unless carried out at once.

[2] firstlings: first produce.

[3] trace: follow.

ROSS.

You must have patience, madam.

LADY MACDUFF.

He had none:
His flight was madness: when our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.

ROSS.

You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

LADY MACDUFF.

Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion, and his titles, in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;
He wants the natural touch:[1] for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear, and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.

ROSS.

My dearest coz,[2]
I pray you, school [3] yourself: but for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o'th'season.[4] I dare not speak much further:
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors,
And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumour
From what we fear,[5] yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way and move.—I take my leave of you:

---

[1] **wants the natural touch:** he lacks normal human instincts.
[2] **coz:** cousin.
[3] **school:** control.
[4] **fits o'th'season:** the uncertainties of the time.
[5] **when we hold rumour/ From what we fear:** when we interpret rumors in accordance with our fears.

Shall not be long but I'll be here again:
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before.—My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!

LADY MACDUFF.

Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

ROSS.

I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort:
I take my leave at once. [*Exit.*

LADY MACDUFF.

Sirrah, your father's dead:
And what will you do now? How will you live?

SON.

As birds do, mother.

LADY MACDUFF.

What, with worms and flies?

SON.

With what I get, I mean; and so do they.

LADY MACDUFF.

Poor bird! thou'ldst never fear the net nor lime,[1]
The pitfall nor the gin.[2]

SON.

Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set for.[3]
My father is not dead, for all your saying.

LADY MACDUFF.

Yes, he is dead: how wilt thou do for a father?

SON.

Nay, how will you do for a husband?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

---

[1] **lime:** birdlime; a sticky substance used in the snaring of birds.
[2] **gin:** snare.
[3] **Poor birds they are not set for:** poor birds are not worth catching; i.e., life's traps are not set for the poor, but for the rich.

SON.

Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

LADY MACDUFF.

Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet, i'faith,
With wit enough for thee.

SON.

Was my father a traitor, mother?

LADY MACDUFF.

Ay, that he was.

SON.

What is a traitor?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, one that swears and lies.

SON.

And be all traitors that do so?

LADY MACDUFF.

Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hang'd.

SON.

And must they all be hang'd that swear and lie?

LADY MACDUFF.

Every one.

SON.

Who must hang them?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, the honest men.

SON.

Then the liars and swearers are fools; for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men, and hang up them.

LADY MACDUFF.

Now, God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father?

SON.

If he were dead, you'ld weep for him: if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

LADY MACDUFF.

Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,
Though in your state of honour I am perfect.[1]
I doubt[2] some danger does approach you nearly:
If you will take a homely[3] man's advice,
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;[4]
To do worse to you were fell[5] cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!
I dare abide no longer. [*Exit.*

LADY MACDUFF.

Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world; where to do harm
Is often laudable; to do good, sometime
Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas,
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say I have done no harm?

Enter MURDERERS.

What are these faces?

FIRST MURDERER.

Where is your husband?

LADY MACDUFF.

I hope, in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou mayst find him.

---

[1] **in your state of honour I am perfect:** I am perfectly well acquainted with your noble rank and character.
[2] **doubt:** fear.
[3] **homely:** plain; humble.
[4] **savage:** cruel.
[5] **fell:** deadly.

FIRST MURDERER.

He's a traitor!

SON.

Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd villain!

FIRST MURDERER.

What, you egg! [*Stabbing him.*

Young fry of treachery!

SON.

He has kill'd me, mother:
Run away, I pray you! [*Dies.*

[*Exit* LADY MACDUFF, *crying 'Murder!' and pursued by the* MURDERERS

SCENE III.

England. Before the KING'S *palace.*

Enter MALCOLM *and* MACDUFF.

MALCOLM.

Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

MACDUFF.

Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal [1] sword; and, like good men,
Bestride[2] our down-faln birthdom:[3] each new morn
New widows howl; new orphans cry; new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland, and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolour.[4]

MALCOLM.

What I believe, I'll wail;[5]
What know, believe; and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.

---

[1] **mortal:** deadly.
[2] **bestride:** stand over to protect.
[3] **birthdom:** country of one's birth.
[4] **dolour:** sorrow.
[5] **wail:** lament.

What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name[1] blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest: you have loved him well;
He hath not toucht you yet. I am young: but something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
T'appease an angry god.

MACDUFF.

I am not treacherous.

MALCOLM.

But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon;
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose:
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell:
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,[2]
Yet grace must still look so.

MACDUFF.

I have lost my hopes.

MALCOLM.

Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
Those precious motives,[3] those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking?—I pray you,
Let not my jealousies[4] be your dishonours,
But mine own safeties:—you may be rightly just,[5]
Whatever I shall think.

---

[1] **sole name:** mere name.
[2] **would wear the brows of grace:** would put on the appearance of virtue.
[3] **motives:** inspirations.
[4] **jealousies:** suspicions.
[5] **rightly just:** honorable.

MACDUFF.

Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,[1]
For goodness dare not check thee! wear thou thy wrongs,
Thy title is affeer'd! [2]—Fare thee well, lord:
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.[3]

MALCOLM.

Be not offended:
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds: I think, withal,
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here, from gracious England,[4] have I offer
Of goodly thousands: but, for all this
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before;
More suffer, and more sundry[5] ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

MACDUFF.

What should he be?

MALCOLM.

It is myself I mean: in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted,
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow; and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
With my confineless[6] harms.

---

[1] **basis sure:** secure foundation.
[2] **affeer'd:** confirmed; sanctioned.
[3] **to boot:** in addition.
[4] **England:** the king of England, Edward the Confessor.
[5] **more sundry:** in more various.
[6] **confineless:** boundless.

MACDUFF.

Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd
In evils to top Macbeth.

MALCOLM.

I grant him bloody,
Luxurious,[1] avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden,[2] malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name: but there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness: your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up
The cistern of my lust; and my desire
All continent[3] impediments would o'erbear,
That did oppose my will: better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.

MACDUFF.

Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
Th'untimely emptying of the happy throne,
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours: you may
Convey your pleasures[4] in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.
We have willing dames enough; there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined.

MALCOLM.

With this, there grows,
In my most ill-composed affection,[5] such
A stanchless[6] avarice, that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands;

---

[1] **Luxurious:** lustful.
[2] **Sudden:** violent; impetuous.
[3] **continent:** restraining.
[4] **Convey your pleasures:** indulge them secretly.
[5] **affection:** disposition.
[6] **stanchless:** insatiable.

Desire his jewels, and this other's house:
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more; that I should forge[1]
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

MACDUFF.

This avarice
Sticks[2] deeper; grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming[3] lust; and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear;
Scotland hath foisons[4] to fill up your will,
Of your mere own:[5] all these are portable,[6]
With other graces weigh'd.[7]

MALCOLM.

But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them; but abound
In the division of each several[8] crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.

MACDUFF.

O Scotland, Scotland!

MALCOLM.

If such a one be fit to govern, speak:
I am as I have spoken.

MACDUFF.

Fit to govern!
No, not to live.—O nation miserable,
With an untitled tyrant bloody-sceptred,

---

[1] **forge:** fabricate. [2] **Sticks:** goes. [3] **summer-seeming:** belonging to the heyday of youth and passing with it. [4] **foisons:** rich harvests; abundance. [5] **mere own:** yours absolutely. [6] **portable:** endurable; bearable. [7] **With other graces weigh'd:** counterbalanced by other virtues. [8] **several:** separate.

When shalt thou see thy wholesome[1] days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction[2] stands accurst,
And does blaspheme his breed? [3]—Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king: the queen that bore thee,
Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she lived.[4] Fare thee well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Hath banisht me from Scotland.—O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!

MALCOLM.

Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of [5] integrity, hath from my soul
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains[6] hath sought to win me
Into his power; and modest[7] wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste: but God above
Deal between thee and me! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeak mine own detraction; here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet
Unknown to woman; never was forsworn;
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own;
At no time broke my faith; would not betray
The devil to his fellow; and delight
No less in truth than life: my first false speaking
Was this upon myself:—what I am truly,
Is thine, and my poor country's, to command:—
Whither, indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,

---

[1] **wholesome:** healthy; prosperous. [2] **interdiction:** ban. [3] **blaspheme his breed:** slander his parentage. [4] **Died every day she lived:** lived a life of daily mortification. [5] **Child of:** born of. [6] **trains:** lures; tricks. [7] **modest:** prudent.

Already at a point, was setting forth:
Now we'll together; and the chance of goodness[1]
Be like our warranted quarrel! [2] Why are you silent?

MACDUFF.

Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
'Tis hard to reconcile.

Enter a DOCTOR.

MALCOLM.

Well; more anon.—Comes the king forth, I pray you?

DOCTOR.

Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure:[3] their malady convinces
The great assay of art;[4] but, at his touch,
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand,
They presently amend.

MALCOLM.

I thank you, doctor. [*Exit* DOCTOR.

MACDUFF.

What's the disease he means?

MALCOLM.

'Tis call'd the evil:[5]
A most miraculous work in this good king;
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
Himself best knows: but strangely-visited people,
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures;
Hanging a golden stamp[6] about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers: and 'tis spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy;

---

[1] **goodness:** success. [2] **warranted quarrel:** just cause. [3] **stay his cure:** wait to be healed by him. [4] **convinces/ The great assay of art:** overpowers all the efforts of medical skill. [5] **the evil:** scrofula, long called "the king's evil." [6] **golden stamp:** gold coin.

And sundry blessings hang about his throne,
That speak him full of grace.

MACDUFF.

See, who comes here?

MALCOLM.

My countryman; but yet I know him not.

Enter ROSS.

MACDUFF.

My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

MALCOLM.

I know him now:—good God, betimes remove
The means[1] that makes us strangers! [2]

ROSS.

Sir, amen.

MACDUFF.

Stands Scotland where it did?

ROSS.

Alas, poor country,—
Almost afraid to know itself! It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave: where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks that rent the air,
Are made, not markt;[3] where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy: [4] the dead man's knell
Is there scarce askt for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,[5]
Dying or e'er they sicken.[6]

MACDUFF.

O, relation
Too nice, and yet too true!

MALCOLM.

What's the newest grief?

---

[1] **means:** Macbeth. [2] **strangers:** apart from each other. [3] **markt:** noticed. [4] **modern ecstasy:** everyday state of being beside one's self. [5] **the flowers in their caps:** it was customary with the Highland soldiers to wear sprigs of heather in their bonnets. [6] **Dying or e'er they sicken:** dying by violence.

ROSS.

That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;[1]
Each minute teems[2] a new one.

MACDUFF.

How does my wife?

ROSS.

Why, well.

MACDUFF.

And all my children?

ROSS.

Well too.

MACDUFF.

The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace? [3]

ROSS.

No; they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.

MACDUFF.

Be not a niggard [4] of your speech: how goes't?

ROSS.

When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were out;[5]
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot:
Now is the time of help; your eye[6] in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff [7] their dire distresses.

MALCOLM.

Be't their comfort
We are coming thither: gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.

---

[1] **doth hiss the speaker:** the speaker is hissed for telling of a crime an hour old (stale news). [2] **teems:** brings forth. [3] **batter'd at their peace:** threatened their safety. [4] **niggard:** sparing. [5] **out:** had taken to the field. [6] **eye:** presence. [7] **doff:** throw off.

ROSS.

Would I could answer
This comfort with the like! But I have words
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch[1] them.

MACDUFF.

What concern they?
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief [2]
Due to some single breast?

ROSS.

No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe; though the main part
Pertains to you alone.

MACDUFF.

If it be mine,
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it.

ROSS.

Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall possess them with[3] the heaviest[4] sound
That ever yet they heard.

MACDUFF.

Hum! I guess at it.

ROSS.

Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry[5] of these murder'd deer,
To add the death of you.

MALCOLM.

Merciful heaven!—
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
Whispers[6] the o'er-fraught[7] heart, and bids it break.

---

[1] **latch:** catch. [2] **fee-grief:** personal grief. [3] **possess them with:** fill them with. [4] **heaviest:** saddest. [5] **quarry:** dead bodies; literally, the game killed in the hunt. [6] **whispers:** whispers to. [7] **o'er-fraught:** overladen.

MACDUFF.

My children too?

ROSS.

Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.

MACDUFF.

And I must be[1] from thence!—
My wife kill'd too?

ROSS.

I have said.

MALCOLM.

Be comforted:
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

MACDUFF.

He has no children.—All my pretty ones?
Did you say all?—O hell-kite! [2]—All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?

MALCOLM.

Dispute it[3] like a man.

MACDUFF.

I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man:
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me.—Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! naught[4] that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls: heaven rest them now!

---

[1] must be: was destined to be.
[2] hell-kite: hell's scavenger.
[3] Dispute it: contend with your sorrows.
[4] naught: worthless thing.

MALCOLM.

Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief
Convert[1] to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

MACDUFF.

O, I could play the woman with mine eyes,
And braggart with my tongue!—But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission;[2] front to front[3]
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he scape,[4]
Heaven forgive him too!

MALCOLM.

This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave:[5] Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments.[6] Receive what cheer you may:
The night is long that never finds the day. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] **Convert:** change. [2] **intermission:** delay. [3] **front to front:** face to face. [4] **scape:** escape. [5] **Our lack is nothing but our leave:** we need only the king's permission to leave. [6] **Put on their instruments:** gird themselves for action.

Macbeth

ACT 5

ACT V

LADY MACBETH's guilt has maddened her, and her waiting woman and a doctor overhear her delirious remarks made while sleepwalking. We then observe the Scottish rebels and their English allies, headed by Lord Siward, on the march. Macbeth remains calm in Dunsinane Castle, certain of his invulnerability. Malcolm instructs his invasion force to camouflage themselves by hewing boughs from Birnam Wood and carrying them. Macbeth then hears of his wife's death and reveals the emptiness of his soul and the meaningless show his life has become. A messenger then tells him that Birnam Wood seems to be moving. Macbeth resolutely sallies forth to fight the invaders, and slays the son of Siward. He then encounters Macduff and glories in the prophecy that none born of woman can harm him. Macduff reveals that he came into the world through what is now known as a Caesarean operation and Macbeth, discouraged but not unmanned, fights on until his death. Macduff decapitates his enemy, and the troops hail Malcolm king, who invites them to see him crowned at Scone, the ancient royal seat of Scotland.

ACT V. Scene I.

Dunsinane. A room in the castle.

Enter a DOCTOR OF PHYSIC *and a* WAITING-GENTLEWOMAN.

DOCTOR.

I have two nights watcht with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walkt?

GENTLEWOMAN.

Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet,[1] take forth paper, fold it, write upon't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

DOCTOR.

A great perturbation in nature,—to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching! [2]—In this slumbery agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

GENTLEWOMAN.

That, sir, which I will not report after her.

---

[1] **closet:** in this case, probably a chest or desk for personal papers.
[2] **effects of watching:** actions of a person who is awake.

DOCTOR.

You may to me; and 'tis most meet[1] you should.

GENTLEWOMAN.

Neither to you nor any one; having no witness to confirm my speech.—Lo you, here she comes!

Enter LADY MACBETH, *with a taper.*

This is her very guise;[2] and, upon my life, fast asleep.
Observe her; stand close.[3]

DOCTOR.

How came she by that light?

GENTLEWOMAN.

Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

DOCTOR.

You see, her eyes are open.

GENTLEWOMAN.

Ay, but their sense are shut.

DOCTOR.

What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

---

[1] **meet:** proper.
[2] **very guise:** usual manner.
[3] **close:** hidden.

GENTLEWOMAN.

It is an accustom'd action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

LADY MACBETH.

Yet here's a spot.

DOCTOR.

Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

LADY MACBETH.

Out, damned spot! out, I say!—One, two; why, then 'tis time to do't.—Hell is murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

DOCTOR.

Do you mark that?

LADY MACBETH.

The thane of Fife had a wife; where is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more o'that, my lord, no more o'that: you mar all with this starting.

DOCTOR.

Go to,[1] go to; you have known what you should not.

GENTLEWOMAN.

She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known.

LADY MACBETH.

Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

---

[1] Go to: for shame

DOCTOR.

What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.[1]

GENTLEWOMAN.

I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.[2]

DOCTOR.

Well, well, well,—

GENTLEWOMAN.

Pray God it be, sir.

DOCTOR.

This disease is beyond my practice:[3] yet I have known those which have walkt in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

LADY MACBETH.

Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so pale: —I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

DOCTOR.

Even so?

LADY MACBETH.

To bed, to bed; there's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand: what's done cannot be undone: to bed, to bed, to bed. [*Exit.*

DOCTOR.

Will she go now to bed?

GENTLEWOMAN.

Directly.

DOCTOR.

Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets:

---

[1] sorely charged: heavily laden.
[2] dignity of the whole body: the queenly rank of Lady Macbeth.
[3] practice: medical skill.

More needs she the divine[1] than the physician:—
God, God forgive us all!—Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,[2]
And still keep eyes upon her:—so, good night:
My mind she has mated,[3] and amazed [4] my sight:
I think, but dare not speak.

GENTLEWOMAN.

Good night, good doctor. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

The country near Dunsinane.

Drum and colours. Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, *and* SOLDIERS.

MENTEITH.

The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff:
Revenges burn in them; for their dear causes
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm[5]
Excite the mortified [6] man.

ANGUS.

Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.

CAITHNESS.

Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

LENNOX.

For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file
Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son,
And many unrough[7] youths, that even now
Protest[8] their first of manhood.

MENTEITH.

What does the tyrant?

CAITHNESS.

Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:

---

[1] **divine**: God's help. [2] **annoyance**: harm. [3] **mated**: bewildered; paralyzed. [4] **amazed**: confused. [5] **alarm**: call to arms. [6] **mortified**: dead. [7] **unrough**: beardless. [8] **Protest**: proclaim.

Some say he's mad; others, that lesser hate him,
Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause
Within the belt of rule.[1]

ANGUS.

Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely[2] revolts upbraid his faith-breach.
Those he commands move only in command,[3]
Nothing in love: now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

MENTEITH.

Who, then, shall blame
His pester'd [4] senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?

CAITHNESS.

Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly owed:
Meet we the medicine[5] of the sickly weal;
And with him pour we in our country's purge
Each drop of us.[6]

LENNOX.

Or so much as it needs,
To dew[7] the sovereign flower,[8] and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam. {*Exeunt, marching.*

---

[1] **He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause/ Within the belt of rule.:** his cause is so wicked that he cannot hide behind his sovereignty. [2] **minutely:** every minute. [3] **Those he commands move only in command:** only because it is their duty, not for love of Macbeth. [4] **pester'd:** troubled. [5] **medicine:** Malcolm. [6] **Each drop of us:** each drop of our blood. [7] **dew:** water. [8] **sovereign flower:** the rightful king, Malcolm.

Scene III.

Dunsinane. A room in the castle.

Enter MACBETH, DOCTOR, *and* ATTENDANTS.

MACBETH.

Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear.[1] What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences[2] have pronounced me thus,
'Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee.'—Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures:[3]
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

Enter A SERVANT.

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!
Where gott'st thou that goose[4] look?

SERVANT.

There is ten thousand—

MACBETH.

Geese, villain?

SERVANT.

Soldiers, sir.

MACBETH.

Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-liver'd [5] boy. What soldiers, patch? [6]
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks[7] of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?

SERVANT.

The English force, so please you.

MACBETH.

Take thy face hence. [*Exit* SERVANT.

---

[1] **taint with fear:** be infected with fear. [2] **mortal consequences:** human affairs. [3] **English epicures:** gluttons; (the Scotch were not used to so rich a fare as the English). [4] **goose:** foolish. [5] **lily-liver'd:** cowardly. [6] **patch:** clown; fool. [7] **linen cheeks:** cheeks like paper.

Seyton!—I am sick at heart,
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push[1]
Will chair me ever, or dis-seat me now.
I have lived long enough: my way of life
Is faln[2] into the sear,[3] the yellow leaf;[4]
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses not loud but deep, mouth-honour,[5] breath,
Which the poor heart would fain[6] deny, and dare not.—
Seyton!

Enter SEYTON.

SEYTON.

What is your gracious pleasure?

MACBETH.

What news more?

SEYTON.

All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.

MACBETH.

I'll fight, till from my bones my flesh be hackt.
Give me my armour.

SEYTON.

'Tis not needed yet.

MACBETH.

I'll put it on.—
Send out moe horses,[7] skirr[8] the country round;
Hang those that talk of fear.—Give me mine armour.—
How does your patient, doctor?

DOCTOR.

Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
That keep her from her rest.

---

[1] **push**: action. [2] **faln**: fallen. [3] **sear**: sere; worn with age; hence, exhausted. [4] **yellow leaf**: a withered leaf ready to fall from the tree. [5] **mouth-honour**: lip service. [6] **fain**: gladly. [7] **moe horses**: more horsemen. [8] **skirr**: scour.

MACBETH.

Cure her of that:
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
Raze out[1] the written troubles of the brain;
And with some sweet oblivious[2] antidote
Cleanse the stuft bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

DOCTOR.

Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.

MACBETH.

Throw physic to the dogs,—I'll none of it.—
Come, put mine armour on; give me my staff:[3]—
Seyton, send out.—Doctor, the thanes fly from me.—
Come, sir, dispatch.[4]—If thou couldst, doctor, cast
The water[5] of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine[6] health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again.—Pull't off, I say.—
What rhubarb, senna,[7] or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?

DOCTOR.

Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

MACBETH.

Bring it after me.—
I will not be afraid of death and bane,[8]
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.

[*Exeunt all but* DOCTOR.

---

[1] **Raze out:** erase. [2] **oblivious:** causing forgetfulness. [3] **staff:** lance. [4] **dispatch:** hurry. [5] **cast/ The water:** examine; analyze; literally, make a urinalysis. [6] **pristine:** original; uncorrupted. [7] **senna:** an herb used as a purgative. [8] **bane:** ruin; destruction.

DOCTOR.

Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exit.*

Scene IV.

Country near Dunsinane: a wood in view.

Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, OLD SIWARD *and* YOUNG SIWARD, MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, ROSS, *and* SOLDIERS, *marching.*

MALCOLM.

Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.[1]

MENTEITH.

We doubt it nothing.

SIWARD.

What wood is this before us?

MENTEITH.

The wood of Birnam.

MALCOLM.

Let every soldier hew him down a bough,
And bear't before him: thereby shall we shadow[2]
The numbers of our host, and make discovery
Err in report of us.

SOLDIERS.

It shall be done.

SIWARD.

We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before't.[3]

MALCOLM.

'Tis his main hope:
For where there is advantage to be ta'en,

---

[1] chambers will be safe: they can be safe in their beds at night.
[2] shadow: deceive the enemy as to the size of our army.
[3] endure/ Our setting down before't: withstand our siege.

Both more and less[1] have given him the revolt;
And none serve with him but constrained things,
Whose hearts are absent too.[2]

MACDUFF.

Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.[3]

SIWARD.

The time approaches
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have, and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate;
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate:[4]
Towards which advance the war. [*Exeunt, marching.*

Scene V.

Dunsinane. Within the castle.

Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, *and* SOLDIERS, *with drum and colours.*

MACBETH.

Hang out our banners on the outward walls;
The cry is still, 'They come:' our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up:
Were they not forced[5] with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home. [*A cry within of women.*
What is that noise?

SEYTON.

It is the cry of women, my good lord. [*Exit.*

---

[1] **Both more and less:** both the great and small. [2] **constrained things,/ Whose hearts are absent too:** men forced to do as they are told and whose hearts are not in the fight. [3] **Let our just censures/ Attend the true event, and put we on/ Industrious soldiership:** let our just decisions await the outcome, and in the meantime, let us be good soldiers. [4] **arbitrate:** decide; speculations are of no use; fighting must settle it. [5] **forced:** reinforced; strengthened.

MACBETH.

I have almost forgot the taste of fears:
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell [1] of hair
Would at a dismal treatise[2] rouse and stir
As life were in't: I have supt full with horrors;
Direness,[3] familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.[4]

Enter SEYTON.

Wherefore was that cry?

SEYTON.

The queen, my lord, is dead.

MACBETH.

She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.—
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

MESSENGER.

Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.

---

[1] fell: skin or hide; pelt.
[2] dismal treatise: horror tale or story.
[3] Direness: horror.
[4] once start me: startle me at any time.

MACBETH.

Well, say, sir.

MESSENGER.

As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I lookt toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.

MACBETH.

Liar and slave!

MESSENGER.

Let me endure your wrath, if't be not so:
Within this three mile may you see it coming;
I say, a moving grove.

MACBETH.

If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling thee:[1] if thy speech be sooth,[2]
I care not if thou dost for me as much.—
I pull in[3] resolution; and begin
To doubt[4] th'equivocation[5] of the fiend,
That lies like truth: 'Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane;'—and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane.—Arm, arm, and out!
If this which he avouches[6] does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
I 'gin[7] to be a-weary of the sun,
And wish th'estate[8] o'th'world were now undone.—
Ring the alarum-bell!—Blow, wind! come, wrack![9]
At least we'll die with harness[10] on our back. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] **cling thee:** shrivel you. [2] **sooth:** truthful. [3] **pull in:** rein; check. [4] **doubt:** fear. [5] **equivocation:** trickery. [6] **avouches:** affirms. [7] **'gin:** begin. [8] **estate:** settled order. [9] **wrack:** ruin. [10] **harness:** armor.

Scene VI.

The same. A plain before the castle.

Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, OLD SIWARD, MACDUFF, *&c., and their* ARMY *with boughs.*

MALCOLM.

Now near enough; your leafy screens throw down,
And show like those you are.—You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,
Lead our first battle:[1] worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon's what else remains to do,
According to our order.[2]

SIWARD.

Fare you well.—
Do we but find the tyrant's power[3] to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

MACDUFF.

Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,[4]
Those clamorous harbingers[5] of blood and death. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII.

The same. Another part of the plain.

Alarums. Enter MACBETH.

MACBETH.

They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the course[6]—What's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter YOUNG SIWARD.

YOUNG SIWARD.

What is thy name?

---

[1] **battle:** battalion. [2] **order:** plan of battle. [3] **power:** forces. [4] **breath:** sound. [5] **harbingers:** heralds. [6] **They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,/ But, bear-like, I must fight the course:** the [illegible] refers to an Elizabethan sport of bear-baiting, in which a bear was tied to a stake while dogs attacked him (each attack was called a course).

MACBETH.

Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.

YOUNG SIWARD.

No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.

MACBETH.

My name's Macbeth.

YOUNG SIWARD.

The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.

MACBETH.

No, nor more fearful.

YOUNG SIWARD.

Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight, and* YOUNG SIWARD *is slain.*

MACBETH.

Thou wast born of woman.—
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandisht by man that's of a woman born. [*Exit.*

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

MACDUFF.

That way the noise is.—Tyrant, show thy face!
If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms
Are hired to bear their staves: either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword, with an unbatter'd edge,
I sheathe again undeeded.[1] There thou shouldst be;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited:[2]—let me find him, fortune!
And more I beg not. [*Exit. Alarum.*

---

[1] **undeeded:** unused.
[2] **bruited:** noisily anounced.

Enter MALCOLM *and* OLD SIWARD.

SIWARD.

This way, my lord;—the castle's gently render'd:[1]
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;
The noble thanes do bravely in the war:
The day almost itself professes yours,[2]
And little is to do.

MALCOLM.

We have met with foes
That strike beside us.[3]

SIWARD.

Enter, sir, the castle. [*Exeunt. Alarum.*

Scene VIII.

The same. Another part of the plain.

Enter MACBETH.

MACBETH.

Why should I play the Roman fool,[4] and die
On mine own sword? whiles I see lives,[5] the gashes
Do better upon them.

Enter MACDUFF.

MACDUFF.

Turn, hell-hound, turn!

MACBETH.

Of all men else I have avoided thee:
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.

MACDUFF.

I have no words,—
My voice is in my sword; thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out! [*They fight. Alarum.*

---

[1] **gently render'd:** taken with little resistance being offered.
[2] **itself professes yours:** declares itself yours.
[3] **strike beside us:** deliberately miss us.
[4] **Roman fool:** may refer to the Roman Cato's suicide, or it may refer to the Roman fashion of self-destruction.
[5] **lives:** enemies.

MACBETH.

Thou losest labour:[1]
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant[2] air
With thy keen sword impress, as make me bleed:
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

MACDUFF.

Despair thy charm;
And let the angel [3] whom thou still hast served
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ript.

MACBETH.

Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That palter[4] with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope!—I'll not fight with thee.

MACDUFF.

Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o'th'time:
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters[5] are,
Painted upon a pole,[6] and underwrit
'Here may you see the tyrant.'

MACBETH.

I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last:—before my body

---

[1] **Thou losest labour:** yours is wasted effort. [2] **intrenchant:** incapable of being cut, or trenched. [3] **angel:** guiding genius; demon. [4] **palter:** equivocate; double-deal. [5] **monsters:** side-show freaks. [6] **Painted upon a pole:** his likeness painted on a cloth hung from a pole.

I throw my warlike shield: lay on, Macduff;
And damn'd be him that first cries 'Hold, enough!'
[*Exeunt, fighting.*

Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colours, MALCOLM, OLD SIWARD, ROSS, THANES, *and* SOLDIERS.

MALCOLM.
I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.
SIWARD.
Some must go off:[1] and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.
MALCOLM.
Macduff is missing, and your noble son.
ROSS.
Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt:
He only lived but till he was a man,
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
In the unshrinking station[2] where he fought,
But like a man he died.
SIWARD.
Then he is dead?
ROSS.
Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.
SIWARD.
Had he his hurts before?[3]
ROSS.
Ay, on the front.
SIWARD.
Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,[4]

---

[1] **go off:** die.
[2] **unshrinking station:** unshrinking attitude (brave).
[3] **before:** in front.
[4] **hairs:** a pun on the word heirs.

I would not wish them to a fairer death:
And so, his knell is knoll'd.

MALCOLM.

He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.

SIWARD.

He's worth no more:
They say he parted [1] well, and paid his score:
And so, God be with him!—Here comes newer comfort.

Enter MACDUFF, *with* MACBETH's *head.*

MACDUFF.

Hail, king! for so thou art: behold, where stands
Th'usurper's cursed head: the time is free:
I see thee compast[2] with thy kingdom's pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine,—
Hail, King of Scotland!

ALL.

Hail, King of Scotland! [*Flourish.*

MALCOLM.

We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you.[3] My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls,—the first that ever Scotland
In such an honour named. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,[4]—
As calling home our exiled friends abroad,
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;
Producing forth[5] the cruel ministers

---

[1] **parted:** departed; died. [2] **compast:** encompassed; surrounded. [3] **reckon with your several loves,/ And make us even with you:** we consider your devotion and loyalty and repay you. [4] **planted newly with the time:** new reforms in accordance with the times (a new regime). [5] **Producing forth:** bringing to justice.

Of this dead butcher, and his fiend-like queen,—
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life;—this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,[1]
We will perform in measure, time, and place:
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

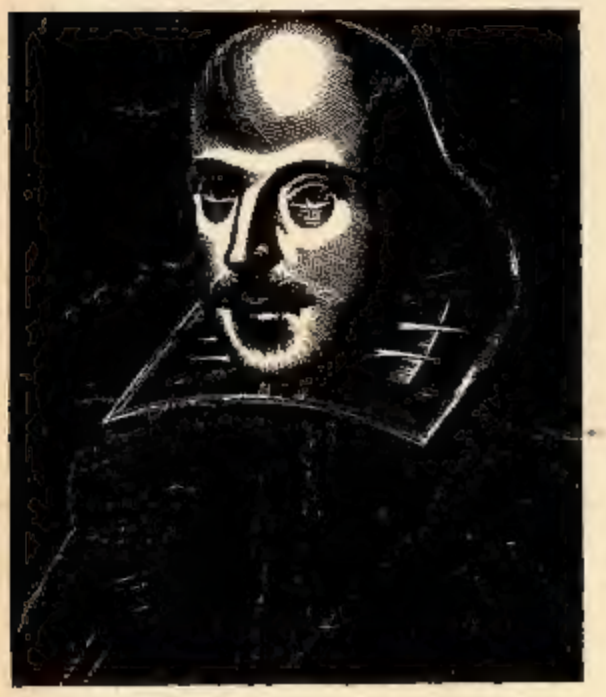
[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

[1] Grace: God.

J 41
PB 3/18/87
CLASSIC
SHA.
Shakespeare, William
The Tragedy of Macbeth.

CLARK COUNTY LIBRARY
609 CADDO STREET
ARKADELPHIA, AR 71923

William Shakespeare



TO THE READER

THIS FIGURE, THAT THOU HERE SEEST PUT,
IT WAS FOR GENTLE SHAKESPEARE CUT;
WHEREIN THE GRAVER HAD A STRIFE
WITH NATURE, TO OUT-DO THE LIFE:
O, COULD HE BUT HAVE DRAWN HIS WIT
AS WELL IN BRASS, AS HE HATH HIT
HIS FACE; THE PRINT WOULD THEN SURPASS
ALL, THAT WAS EVER WRIT IN BRASS.
BUT, SINCE HE CANNOT, READER, LOOK,
NOT ON HIS PICTURE, BUT HIS BOOK.

BEN: JONSON.

The Mediaeval view of man was generally not an exalted one. It saw him as more or less depraved, fallen from Grace as a result of Adam's sin; and the things of this world as of little value in terms of his salvation. Natural life was thought of mainly as a preparation for man's entry into Eternity. But Renaissance thought soon began to rehabilitate man and nature. Without denying man's need for Grace, men came gradually to accept the idea that there were "goods," values, "innocent delights" to be had in the world here and now. Man himself was seen no longer as wholly vile and depraved, incapable even of desiring goodness, but rather as Shakespeare saw him in *Hamlet*:

> *"What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason!*
> *how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how*
> *express and admirable! in action how like an angel!*
> *in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world!*
> *the paragon of animals!"*

It was, indeed, a very stirring time to be alive in. It was a time like spring, when promise, opportunity, challenge, and growth appeared where none had been dreamed of before. Perhaps this is why there is so much poetry of springtime in the age of Shakespeare.

Edited with Introduction and Suggestions for Study by O. H. Rudzik

0804910022
04/23/2017 23:15-3
22

Publi

ISBN: 0-8049-1002-2